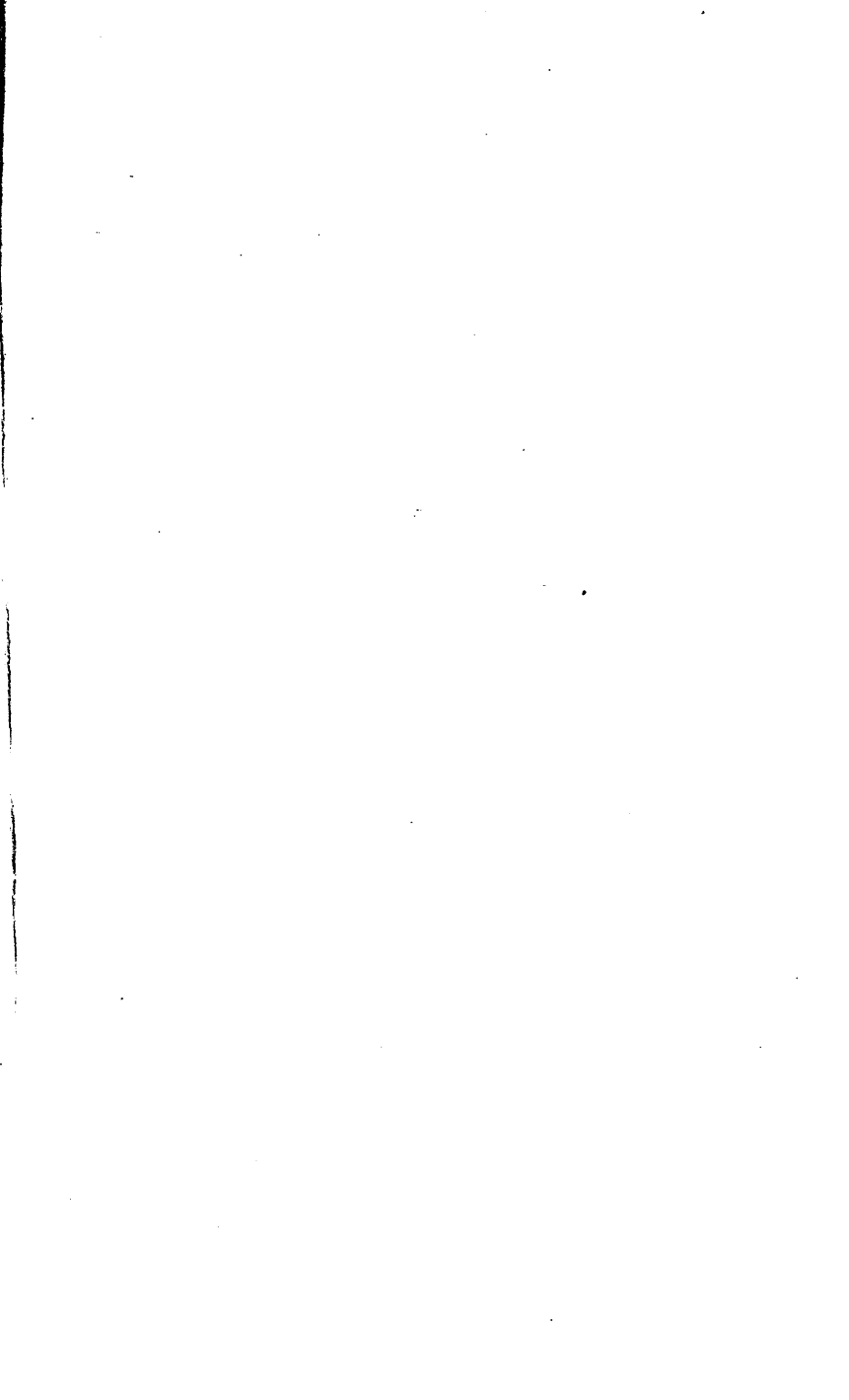
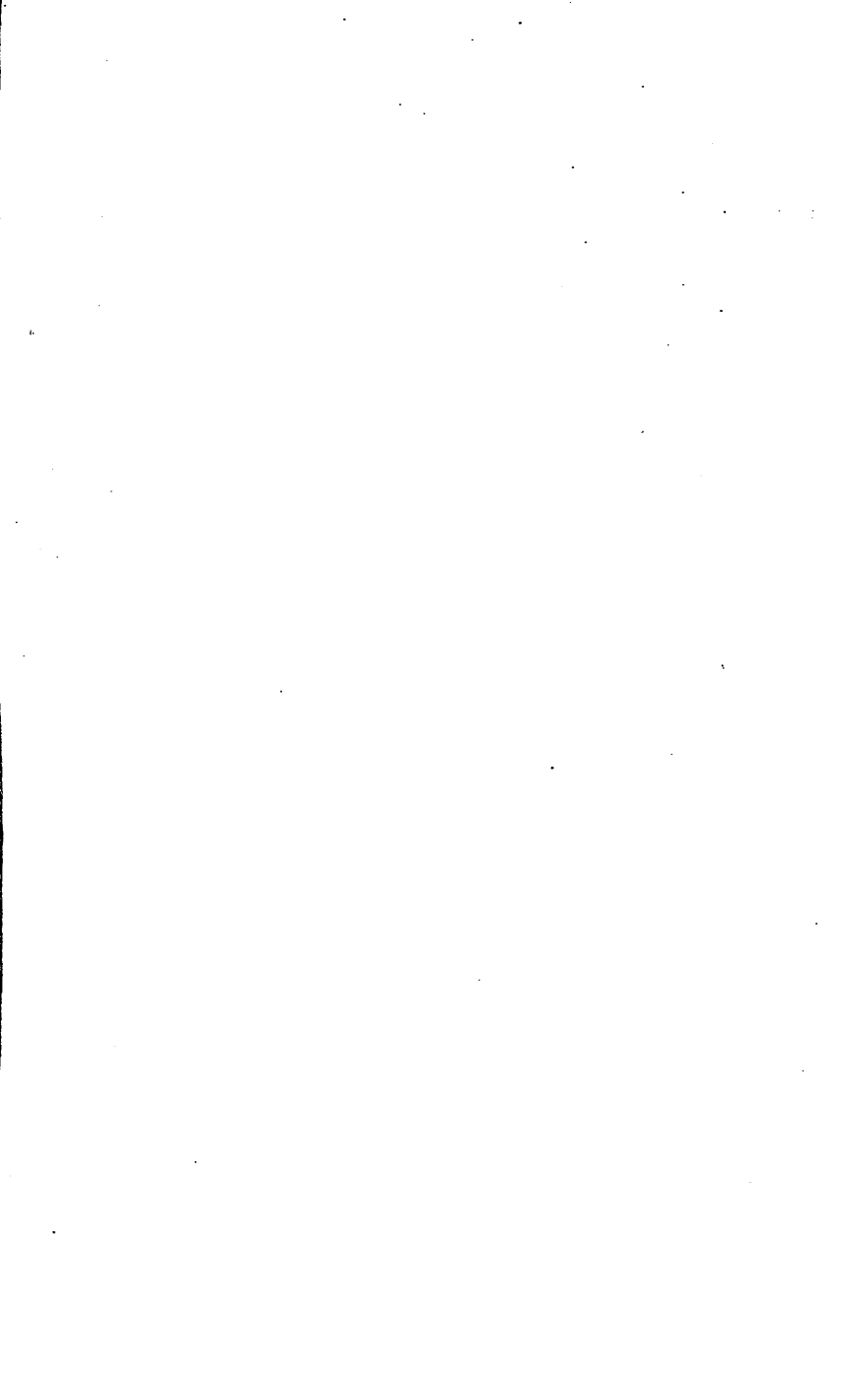


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# ST. PAUL AND HIS TEACHING

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# ST. PAUL AND HIS TEACHING

BEING LECTURES DELIVERED AT ABERDEEN, 1928-29  
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ABERDEEN DIOCESAN  
BRANCH OF THE CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY OF  
SCOTLAND

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE papers herein published contain the substance of lectures delivered at Aberdeen during the winter of 1928-29, under the auspices of the Aberdeen Diocesan Branch of the Catholic Truth Society of Scotland, with the approval of which branch they are now issued as a companion volume to those on the Bible.<sup>1</sup> Delay has been inevitable, due among other reasons to the sickness of one of the lecturers ; but the subject of the book is one whose interest can never wane, and it is hoped that it may encourage the faithful to make themselves more familiar with the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and offer them some useful guidance in their reading and study. It may also serve to vindicate his teaching from much misunderstanding on the part of modern scholars and others, who show a tendency, not merely to misrepresent St. Paul's teaching on individual points, but to deny that he made much of doctrine at all. It is a lamentable

<sup>1</sup>The Bible : its history, authenticity and authority, etc. (Sands, 1926).

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thing that they should champion a Christianity—if Christianity it be—so utterly inconsistent with his in substance and in detail ; it is even more lamentable, and a veritable poisoning of the wells, that they should assimilate St. Paul's standpoint to their own. This is due, no doubt to a well-meaning desire to find a " permanent value " in his writings ; but others may find that value where they do not, and in any case falsehood cannot serve the cause of truth.

There are, of course, others who openly disagree with St. Paul ; and in regard of them the only question can be, how far they have the right to call themselves Christians, or how far they should even wish to do so, when they believe Christianity to be tainted at the source. Even if they do not impute error to Christ Himself—which some do—they must at least impute it to the apostolic college in imputing it to Paul. He was teaching and writing within thirty years of the Ascension, and it is evident how fast he held to the unity of the Church in organization and doctrine. His whole teaching of the Mystical Body of Christ (e.g., in 1 Cor. xii.) implies a single body or organism, and the submitting of his gospel to James and Peter and John, " for

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fear I might be running or had run in vain " (Gal. ii. 2) is sufficient to prove his belief in the necessity of " one faith " (Eph. iv. 5 : *cf.* I Cor. xv. 11 : etc.).

St. Paul's concept of the Church as one in its external organisation is made admirably clear by Father Ronald Knox ; three other papers set forth his belief in doctrines which he clearly held to be essential to Christianity. Other articles of his faith would have admitted of a like treatment ; but it was necessary to devote the introductory lecture to an account of the apostle himself, which will be found of much value in order to a better understanding of his mind and thought.

St. Paul is, in fact, intensely dogmatic ; there is a strict unity likewise in his thought. His was a synthetic mind ; as Father Alphonsus so well puts it in his second paragraph, " St Paul was a man of one idea, and that idea Christ. . . . St. Paul's theology is Christocentric." He is concerned to teach what Christ is in Himself, what He is to be in us ; we must be united to Him in His death and in His life. " With Christ I am nailed to the Cross ; it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me " (Gal. ii. 19-20).

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We must not look for the profoundest thought of Paul in what is more or less controversial writing about justification, but in his interpretation of the Christ-life as supreme and divine experience, Christ alive and working in the Church as a whole and in every part of it. No need to ask whether Paul found that experience satisfying ; yet it was not a blind, tentative, variable experience, it was not built upon the sand of a sentimental agnosticism, but upon the rock of supernatural faith. " I know in whom I have put my trust " (II Tim. i. 12).

For Paul therefore, as for the Catholic, there is an intimate and ineffable union between the Christian, both in his individual and corporate capacity, and Christ ; the union, indeed, set forth by Christ Himself at the Last Supper. " Not for them only do I pray, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they all may be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee—that they too may be in us, in order that the world may believe that thou hast sent me . . . that they may be one, as we are one—I in them, and thou in me—that they may be perfected in unity " (John xvii. 20-23). It is one of the paradoxes of history that Protestant-

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ism, shattering the very concept of the visible Church of Christ, in which He lives and through which He works, setting up also an impassable barrier between Christ and the soul in its doctrine of the mere imputing of righteousness, in place of the traditional Catholic doctrine of the very imparting of grace and justness—that such a system should claim to have brought us nearer to Christ !

Nowadays a greater sense of the need of external unity prevails, and a craving for it that appears only to grow with time. It is impossible not to recognise the significance of the amalgamation that has been effected in Scotland. If such reunion is contained as yet within national boundaries, it cannot be said that the ideals and desires at work are subject to any such limitation. What is so deeply to be regretted is the small part played in the business by supernatural faith in a divine revelation ; union has been made possible by the growth of unbelief rather than of belief. The canny naturalism of the Scot appears to be more averse than ever to the tremendous divine intervention in human affairs postulated by the Catholic Church, and to the utter surrender that should follow upon it. Fed



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upon a legend well illustrated by Major Hay's *Chain of Error in Scottish History* (Longmans), he still in large measure regards with dour bigotry the Church of Christ, "which is his body, the fulness of Him who is wholly fulfilled in all" (Ephes. i. 22-23); he needs a heavenly Damascus-vision to teach him once for all, as it taught Paul, the whole lesson of the Mystical Body of Christ: "Why persecutest thou *Me*?"

Still, the love and veneration of Holy Scripture is not dead, nor are there wanting those who in despair of any other champion thereof look wistfully to the Church to see where any sure defence can be found in her. When they recognise in her ministers and in her faithful an unshaken faith in the inspired word of God, they may also be more ready to consider what is the true teaching of the Bible itself, and most of all of him whom the Church hails as "Preacher of truth and Doctor of the Nations." To aid such seekers, no less than for their own profit, Catholics may be led to stir up their interest in Holy Writ, and it may be hoped that they too will find in this little book some help towards making their own the magnificent message of Paul.

# ST. PAUL AND HIS TEACHING

## I

### LIFE AND LETTERS

**I**T is surely not the smallest of the mysteries of Divine Providence that after twelve Apostles had been chosen by Christ Himself and taught by His own mouth and fired by His own personal example, and then by the Holy Ghost himself, another should have been elected—and that from the rank of Christ's persecutors—to perform, as far as man can judge, the chief active work in preaching to all nations, in bringing the light hidden in the little nation of Palestinian Jews before the eyes of the whole great civilized world, and in teaching and explaining to the world then and the Christian world to come, the essential doctrines of Christianity. The mystery is not so much the nature as the pre-eminence of his work. Other apostles, such as Barnabas, were also added to the twelve, though these

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retained always a unique position, though not uniquely the title of apostle : the apostles and disciples also carried the name of Christ to the Gentiles. But none, it would seem, so widely and so intensely as this late-comer. He was prepared and fitted, as none other, for this work, and could claim afterwards that by the grace of God he had laboured more abundantly even than the great apostles (1 Cor. xv. 10).

God's right was again to be vindicated to choose his labourer at the eleventh hour and give him equal payment with the others. But in this case, differently from the parable, there was no opposition or jealousy. James and Cephas and John—St. Paul tells us—themselves the pillars of the Church, gave him the right hands of fellowship (Gal. ii., 9), and Paul was proud to be numbered among the Apostles of Christ, and knew no greater honour.

It was in strange and grim fashion that this new apostle made his entry into the public life of the Church. A follower of Christ was being tried for professing his belief in the crucified Jesus of Nazareth. He was brought, as His Master before him, before the Sanhedrin, and like Him, and with equal justice, he was con-

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demned to death by this dying nation : the firstfruits of a rich harvest of Christian victories. There followed the brutal passionate scenes of a public execution, with the public themselves as executioners ; and present there, and taking part though not an active part in this, was a young man whose name was Saul. And St. Stephen prayed, " Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And Saul was consenting to his death."

St. Paul's presence there at this death-scene was no chance happening. Not indeed the brutality, but the fierce conclusiveness of the shedding of blood, of the giving up of life itself, sounded an appeal to one whom only the complete surrender of life would satisfy : " I live now, no longer I but Christ liveth in me," he was to say afterwards, and we know from an unstinted tradition how a martyrdom, this time his own, brought his self-surrender to its natural conclusion. Thus from martyrdom to martyrdom his active life is traced, a blazing trail of red. Such alone fitted his spirit. He could no more remain a passive spectator at St. Stephen's martyrdom than he could remain a passive follower when his allegiance had passed to Jesus the Christ. Fire and energy and inspiration

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were the stirring elements in this man's composition. Somewhere they must find an outlet for their onrush. For the moment they are finding it in the persecution of this new Jewish sect, who were dragging the great name of Jewry in the dust by claiming a crucified failure for the Messiah and the Son of God. Very soon this great flood of energy would be diverted and even hurled back. For Christ's mysterious grace was at hand to change the fiery persecutor of Christ into a fervent apostle of Christ : on behalf of this very Christ for whom Stephen was dying, he also was destined to live, as only he could live, and, at the end, to die.

Paul must at this time of the great crisis of his life, have been about thirty years of age. He was a young man, yet within a short time he was charged by the Jewish leaders with a position of trust and authority, which among the Jews implies that he was not less than thirty years of age. He was charged to go to Damascus and bring back in bonds to Jerusalem any whom he might find following this new-fangled doctrine. "And as I was going," he says, "and drawing nigh to Damascus about mid-day, suddenly from heaven there shone round about me a great light,

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and falling on the ground, I heard a voice saying to me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ? ”

He needed light : here was such abundance that it blinded him. And if he knew not, or refused to know, the voice that spoke, at least it was of one whom he must address as Lord : “ Who art thou, Lord ? ”

“ I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.”

“ What shall I do, Lord ? ” (Acts xxii. 6-10).

Was ever such a change in the soul of a man ? The proud head that had flashed scorn and contempt and hate on the following of Jesus of Nazareth is now bowed in submission ; in place of passing sentence on Christians, he asks only for instruction from Christ. He will do anything : only let him know what he must do ; an immortal word of complete submission. A new fealty is now his ; he is become a soldier of Christ. The persecutor has become the disciple. The reality of this stupendous happening in the life-history of St. Paul has been denied by many, but for no reason except precisely its miraculous character. Its truth is proclaimed not merely in the historical writings of St. Luke, but in the logical and psychological necessities of

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his change of allegiance. Unless one is willing to jettison the whole traditional account of his life, some such extraordinary intervention is a clear necessity. In his later life St. Paul himself shows he had no doubt concerning its reality, relating it twice himself (Acts xxii. and xxvi), and true Christianity has always followed him.

What then was it that his Lord would have him to do? And how was he fitted for it, and how did he accomplish it? Under those headings we will seek to appreciate the work which he was called upon to do and the manner of its accomplishment.

What was it, then, that his new Lord would have him to do? It was very shortly announced. "This man is to me a vessel of election, to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and children of Israel." He was specially chosen to bring the knowledge and service of Jesus of Nazareth, the Crucified one, to the Gentile nations, and also to the Jews. He was to prove to the Jews that Jesus, though He died, as a criminal, on a cross, was the Messiah of all their prophecies and hopes, and the only means of salvation from the wrath to come: to the Gentiles he was to show the folly and the

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misery of their lives, marked with the sign of death, and he was to satisfy their deepest need, which was for life, for an end to this corruption which even they themselves recognized in their gross and unnatural immorality, by bringing them to the true Lord of life, through whom they should live again and for ever.

His work for the Gentiles is put first, because it was for that especially that he was chosen and fitted, as it was that especially which he accomplished.

What was this Gentile world, and what weapons would he need to attack and conquer it ?

Geographically, it was, one may say, the world of the Mediterranean Sea, the lands surrounding this vast lake. There were, of course, other inhabited lands, but vital life had passed out of them, and was now concentrated in these Mediterranean countries. Politically, it was the Roman empire : in all those lands the law of Rome held sway. The sceptre of world-power had passed, with the Sun, from East to West : Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Persia, Greece, had each in turn seized and held it for a time : now mighty Rome was in possession, and the world-



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government was Roman. As a Roman citizen, a privilege he had inherited from his parents, the apostle could claim to be well-equipped politically for his work of appeal to Caesar's subjects. But his political or legal status would not actually have brought him very far in his work. For a strange feature of this Roman empire has now to be noticed. Though politically Roman, culturally it was Greek. The Romans had conquered in war the countries which Alexander the Greek had made his own three centuries before, and bequeathed to his Greek followers. But in peace the Roman civilization was, as yet at least, no match for the Greek civilization which they had come to possess. Rather Greek thought and Greek word retained and increased its mastery over the world which Rome politically held subject. Alexander in death was having his revenge. Many of the cities through which the apostle was to pass bore the names and retained the character which they had received from Alexander and his successors: Antioch, Seleucia, Laodicea, Philippi, Thessalonica, were titles which gave constant witness to Alexander's surviving greatness. The language, again, of

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the Roman Empire was, at least in all cities and places of commerce, the language of Alexander's kingdom. Even Rome herself had capitulated and accepted Greek for her word and writing : and when the apostle writes to the church in Rome, it is in Greek that he writes. No Latin word of his in writing or speech has ever come down to us.

Greek thought, again, prevailed and predominated. Greek philosophy and theology with their characteristic combination of scepticism and superstition, with their readiness to accept and absorb the multi-coloured beliefs and practices which poured in from more Eastern lands (where external rites were thought to bring salvation from the wrath of the gods), these were the doctrinal rivals which Christianity had to meet and conquer. If the Christian apostle could but gain their attention and bring them his doctrine of real life through the Son of the God of Life, with his proofs from the Gospels and the signs in the actual lives of Christians and Christian leaders, his victory would be assured. But it was a Greek world he must be ready to meet under the aegis of the Roman banner, and this he must himself first know and

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understand if he was to receive the attention which was his one great need. We would look, therefore, for our apostle among such as had themselves grown great amidst this Grecian world. He might indeed receive all necessary gifts and powers at once and miraculously, when he received the special blessing of the Holy Ghost. But God does not ordinarily work in that way. He who gives a man his natural gifts, powers and opportunities, gives them with a Divine prescience and purpose for a work He has already designed for him. So in St. Paul's case we may look and we shall see how his birth and his upbringing, and his more personal gifts, had conspired to fit him—and fit him like no other apostle—for this work of bringing a Greek gentile world to the feet of the Jewish Rabbi, Jesus the Son of the carpenter of Nazareth.

Thereby we come to our second question : how was he fitted for the work he had to perform ? His doctrine was primarily and fundamentally Jewish, his appeal was to a Gentile world. How was he to bring these two together ? How could he, unless he could combine in his own person these two diverse elements ? They

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must come together in his own mental life, if he was to join them together for others. The history of his early life shows how they did combine in him.

His first necessity was an intimate knowledge of his own doctrine, a knowledge of Jewish history and Jewish prophecy, and of the manner in which all things had now been fulfilled in Christ Jesus. This first necessity was met by his birth and early upbringing.

He was born of Jewish parents of the tribe of Benjamin, "A Hebrew of the Hebrews," he tells us, "as to the law a Pharisee" (Phil. iii. 5), therefore of the strictest sect of Law-observers. From them he would learn to know and love and be proud of his great Jewish inheritance; and nearly thirty years after his conversion he speaks with poignant sadness of his wayward brethren for whom he would be willing to be anathema, to be under God's curse, if he could gain them for Christ: "Who are," he says, "my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongeth the adoption as of children, and the glory and the testament and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers." (Rom.

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ix. 3-7). All the intimacies of God's relations to man had been theirs ; and he never ceased to love and reverence this rich possession which had come down to him and to the world through the Jewish people. His parents, as strict Pharisees, must have planted that affection in his breast. Soon as a young man he went up to Jerusalem, and there he had perhaps the greatest of all Jewish teachers as his master, the great Gamaliel, whom the Acts of the Apostles show combining a deep reverence for his Jewish law with a wondering willingness to obey God's will if he bids them renounce it. From him Saul would receive a deeper knowledge of the text and of the meaning of the Scriptures : but also surely, from such a man, a fundamental reverence for God's will which would make more possible afterwards the wonderful submission to God's will on the road to Damascus.

Thus, at home and in Jerusalem, the necessities of his Jewish upbringing and education were provided for, and one need for his future work for Christ was satisfied. But his mission required also a knowledge and an understanding and a sympathy with the world outside the narrow limits of Jewish life, a broadmindedness

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in a healthy sense, which were hardly to be sought in a Pharisee family of Our Lord's time. This need, also, Providence had provided for, and in a way which marks him off very distinctly from the twelve Apostles, and goes far to explain his pre-eminence in this kind of work. His place of birth, the city to which he belonged, furnished him with this other side of his apostolic education. Saul of Tarsus he was called, and Tarsus in Cilicia is a big word in his life's book. Situated just at the angle where Asia Minor joins the Palestinian coast, it marks the meeting-place of East and West. On the one side Asia Minor, with its Greek, Jewish, Oriental cities, Greece with its tenacious culture, mighty Rome, and beyond, France and Spain ; on the other side Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Mesopotamia, the lands of ancient greatness and passing civilization, where old men dreamt dreams but few young men saw visions, the Oriental world so different from the Western. Here, in Tarsus, the great caravan roads North and East and West met, and poured out their merchandise, human and material. Here the boy Saul, wandering into the streets and bazaars, would see the strangest medley of colours and characters ; he would

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hear the different sounds of strange languages, and mark the various types of character and religious customs. As a child of religious parents of active mind and searching eyes, he may well have thought with sadness over this conflict of mind and belief, and perhaps dreamt of a unity which would bring all these together in the worship of the one God. "For in Christ," he was afterwards to say, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female : for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28). And it was a thought he was always repeating. Here in Tarsus, assuredly, even if unconsciously, he was gaining understanding and sympathy for these strangers to God whose worship was the cult of devils.

With increasing years the city would give him a more definite and scientific knowledge of Greek life and culture : for Tarsus was no small village ; it was a great and wealthy city, with a university and a culture surpassing at that time even those of Athens or Alexandria. Whether he attended the university does not appear. The social status of his parents, even though they had inherited the privilege of Roman

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citizenship which they passed on to him, was probably not very high. He learnt the making of tent-cloth, the characteristic industry of Cilicia, and perhaps not merely as a pastime or occasional occupation but as a necessity. In any case, he certainly learnt his Greek in Tarsus, and he is a master of it, and has a knowledge of Greek literature ; but his Greek is learnt for social or business intercourse ; it has nothing of the polished artificial style of professional writers or rhetoricians, which is now known to have been something quite distinct from the Greek of ordinary intercourse. He learnt it, therefore, as a necessity of daily life, not for a profession, and he used it afterwards as an instrument for Christ's work, an instrument which he could wield and dominate, not as something which could dominate him.

Thus Tarsus, the Greek city, took its place by the side of his Jewish parents as a pedagogue unto Christ, supplying its part in his education for the work he was intended to do.

We have seen now something of the kind of world which he should set out to conquer for Christ, and we have seen, secondly, how he was peculiarly fitted for that work. How then,



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finally, did he perform this mission which was waiting precisely for him according to Divine destiny? Had he the personal gifts, and had he the will to use well these talents which Providence had presented to him for his work as an instrument of God? His life as a Christian Apostle is the answer. "God's grace hath not been void in me," he is able to say: "I have laboured more abundantly than all the apostles" (I Cor. xv. 10). And again, just before his martyrdom: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (II Tim. iv. 7). And his life as related by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles and as indicated by his own epistles shows how truly he spoke. From these combined sources we learn that he was not sent immediately on his mission of preaching Christ crucified. From Damascus, where he recovered his sight after three days of blindness and fasting, he went into retreat in Arabia to prepare, and be prepared for, his apostolic work. So back to Damascus, where he began to preach to the Jews, and after three years, and not before, to Jerusalem, and then home to Tarsus in Cilicia. And there he remained for a time, waiting, it seems, a sum-

mons for God. It came in the person of Barnabas, who brought him to Antioch, the great Gentile city, where, we are told, he "conversed a whole year and taught a great multitude, so that there the disciples were first named Christians" (Acts xi. 26); that is to say, that his disciples were so large in number and so independent in doctrine that they were now recognised as not merely a Jewish sect, but as a distinct body deserving a separate name. From here, and after this preliminary work, his specific work began, with a special designation from the Holy Ghost—"Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them. Then they, fasting and praying and imposing hands upon them, sent them away" (Acts xiii. 2-3). In such a way, not with shouts of triumph but with quiet, humble prayer, St. Paul commenced his great missionary journeys. The Acts show four of these, in which the apostle carried his teaching further and further West, leaving the Eastern countries to others. First to Asia Minor with its Greek cities and Jewish colonies, then by direct angelic invitation into Europe, with further foundations there, beginning with Philippi and coming down into Greece

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as far as Athens and Corinth. His third journey was a repetition of this ; his fourth as a prisoner who had appealed to Caesar and should go to mighty Caesar at Rome itself. " Rome also I must see," he had said (Acts xix. 21), and now his need was satisfied. There the Acts leave him after two years in loose captivity, and his own writings and tradition take up the thread and trace it to the end of his life's span. His apostolic ambition looked further beyond Rome and coveted Spain, the furthestmost part west ; but whether this desire was actually fulfilled does not appear with certainty. Very early tradition claims the fact of a visit without supplying any details. Certainly a time of freedom followed his first two years in Rome, and from Titus and I Timothy we know he returned eastwards, coming to Crete and Ephesus and Greece, then back to Rome, whence he wrote the last of all his Epistles, the Second to Timothy, shortly before his martyrdom (in 67 A.D.) which he now knows to be imminent. Some twenty years cover this period of his work as an apostle of Christ, years of ceaseless, restless energy in which fierce troubles and persecutions and bitter sadness alternated with, or were suffused with,

deepest joy in Christ, and sometimes ineffable favours. "I know a man," says, he "whether in the body or out of the body, I know not ; such an one rapt to the third heaven. I know such a man, that he was caught up into paradise, and heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter " (II Cor. xii. 2-4). And then with the characteristic candour and openness which is so much the charm and attraction of his life and writings, he goes on of the angel of Satan sent to buffet him, and of God's refusal to release him from this. "My grace is sufficient : power is made perfect in trials of weakness " (II Cor. xii. 9). God refuses His great apostle the release from which he prays, but He assures him of His Divine assistance—surely a priceless example for all striving Christians.

In these twenty years of romantic yet intensely practical work for Christ, it is cities that especially mark the lines of his journeyings; a child himself of a great city, he found there alone the satisfying of his apostolic ambition. The Church of Christ must stand on the public square, where pagan temples were now standing, in the midst of the vibrating world of human restlessness must the crucified Christ be

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preached. Therefore from Antioch to Ephesus, to Athens, to Corinth, to Rome itself, he must go with his new doctrine of salvation.

He made his way on foot with a few companions, unless a quicker journey by sea was necessary. The simplest of clothes, sandals, his Bible volumes and papyrus leaves were all he carried with him. Coming to a city, he worked there for a living with his own hands, surrendering his right to the labourer's hire : he will not be a burden to his Church, they can ill-afford to give. A characteristic action, this, of St. Paul : he who most emphatically asserted the right of the apostle to material support, would not himself accept it, except from his beloved Church at Philippi. Here, as always, his love denied him the use of his rights : his own immortal principle for Christians.

He commenced his work of preaching ordinarily in the Jewish synagogue or meeting-place on the Sabbath-day, making his first appeal therefore to the Jews. The Septuagint or Greek Bible here in use would have spread its influence among the many Greek-speaking Gentiles, and so prepared the way among them, and so among them he then continued his work,

beginning with those whom Judaism had already attracted to the One God. We find him also preaching in other places, on the market-place, in public halls, even in prison ; and in undisturbed times he was at their service in his own house. It was not long before his fame became wide known, " and they brought from his body to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them " (Acts xix. 12). His teaching was of the freedom which God was now offering to them—freedom from the Law for the Jew, freedom from the crushing slavery of evil passion for the Gentile, freedom from the coming judgment for all ; and all through Christ's work, who alone could bring man freedom, which he was powerless to gain for himself.

So he founded a church or community in one city, and leaving it, when he was able, whether it was after a few months or perhaps two or three years, he would pass on to work in other places where the name of Christ was unknown. But always he kept in touch by letter or personal intermediaries with the churches he had founded. And so, with the need of authority to correct or instruction to enlighten, arose a body

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of letters of which most have survived and come down to us. Not all indeed of the fourteen Epistles which tradition assigns to St. Paul arose in this way, from personal relations. Six of these are such letters to his own foundations ; four are to private individuals, two more, Ephesians and Colossians, are to meet similar immediate needs, but not to Churches of his own foundation ; two only, Romans and Hebrews, are rather treatises given more to the world than to a single Church or an immediate want. The authenticity of these fourteen Epistles is not a question which can here be discussed. Suffice it to say that the four great Epistles have never seriously been denied to St. Paul, and with regard to the others, the clear tendency of rationalist critics is ever back to the traditional view.

The style is simple and unaffected, intense rather than eloquent, allowing the doctrine to make its own appeal without artificial support ; it was not his work to teach a literary style to his contemporaries. Where he does rise to poetical heights, it is the subject that bears him away, not he that is bolstering up the subject, and it is no accident that the most sublime passage in his

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writings is concerned with Love or Charity. For that, God's love for us and our love for God, was of all things the most intensely living thing in his life.

Papyrus was his material, perishing so easily that all the originals were quickly lost : and dictation was often his method, with a signature in his own hand at the end. " See," he says to the Galatians, " with what large letters I am writing to you in my own hand " (Gal. vi. 11), indicating that this latter part of the Epistle was so written, in contrast to the smaller script of his scribe.

The theme of his epistles is essentially the theme of his preaching, with particular applications or emphasis. It is not in place here to discuss it in detail. It centres round the person and work of Christ : the full divinity of Him who, being in the form of God, emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, humbling Himself even unto death (Phil. ii. 5-8)—of Him who " being rich became poor for your sakes " (11 Cor. viii. 9), the work of One who " when as yet we were sinners died for us " (Rom. v. 8)—by whose justice and obedience all men were made just. So he expounds his great doctrine of



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Grace, abolishing the Jewish law and putting Christ's work in its place.

In his later Epistles he shows how Christ's work is applied to us—namely by our mystical union with Him, so that what He has, we now share, already in this life, in its fullness in the next, which for the Christian is but the fullness of this.

His doctrine has remained the doctrine of the Church, and lives as such through the centuries. But perhaps greater than this appeal to the intellect is the appeal of his own personal life to the heart. His intensely human character, as he so fearlessly exposes it in his Epistles, his confessions of weakness, his story of his own struggles, his supremely selfless sympathy for others, in fine, his living in his own life the doctrines which he learnt from his Master and taught to others, make an overwhelming appeal to the love and admiration of mankind, which always finds practice more irresistible than theory. Where he is known he will be loved, and being loved, obeyed.

## II

### THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

**S**T. PAUL stands before us as an apostle rather than as a theologian. An apostle he was in the restricted sense of the term, one to whom revelation had been directly given with a divine command to spread it. But when we say that he was an apostle rather than a theologian, we are thinking rather of the apostolic spirit burning with the desire to spread the good tidings of Christ as distinguished from the acumen which is directly concerned to study and record the full implication of those good tidings. No doubt St. Paul was also a theologian, for he studied and recorded—and that under the guidance of divine inspiration—the implications of God's message : but this was a secondary matter with him and subservient to the primary purpose which he set himself—"to bring every mind into captivity to the obedience of Christ."<sup>1</sup> St. Paul was by nature an apostle ; he could not be con-

<sup>1</sup> II Cor. x. 5.

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tent to know the truth, he had to be up and battling for it. He lives in a world of men and not merely of ideas. His writings do not reveal an appreciation of the beauties of nature ; the human microcosm with its mysterious depths and apparent contradictions monopolises his attention, and even his favourite metaphors are taken from the strenuous endeavours of the Greek games. When we first meet St. Paul, it is as a rushing force intent on stamping out the followers of Jesus. The change wrought in him by the vision of Jesus did not destroy that force ; it simply turned it in the opposite direction. The inspiration of his life from that time onwards was that he was " an Apostle of Christ Jesus,"<sup>1</sup> nay more, " a servant of Christ Jesus,"<sup>2</sup> till the day when from Rome he could proudly begin a letter, " Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus."<sup>3</sup>

In a sense, therefore, we can say that St. Paul was a man of one idea, and that idea Christ. But if to him Christ Jesus was indeed all in all, yet he did not lose or relax his interest in the pulsating, engrossing, human life of which he

<sup>1</sup> See (*e.g.*) II Cor. i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. i. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Philem. i. 1.

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was himself a part. But he saw it all and thought of it all in reference to his Master. We can express this in a learned phrase by saying that St. Paul's theology is Christocentric.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the passages in the writings of St. Paul concerning the person of Jesus Christ, it is well to recall that each of those writings arose out of some special circumstances of the moment.<sup>1</sup> St. Paul founded his Christian communities by laborious argument and instruction, returning again and again to the same place to continue and complete that instruction.<sup>2</sup> When some particular necessity arose and he was unable to meet it by a visit, he wrote a letter. Thus from the very nature of the case his epistles are occasional writings

<sup>1</sup> We usually call the writings of St. Paul his "Epistles," but they are really "Letters," excepting only the Epistle to the Hebrews and perhaps that to the Romans. A Letter differs from an Epistle in that it supplements oral conversation and is for the information of the person or persons to whom it is sent. Others may derive knowledge from it, but they cannot grasp its full purport unless they know the facts in possession of the persons receiving the letter, and which the writer supposes to be known. An Epistle on the other hand is a complete treatment of some subject which is destined for a public, either particular or general, and does not take for granted a knowledge of any previous communication with individuals.

<sup>2</sup> This will be readily realized by reading Acts xiii., xiv., xv. (36-41), xvi.-xx. It is fairly certain also that St. Paul visited the churches of the East again after his release from captivity probably after his visit to Spain.

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supplementing his oral teaching, or applying it to particular circumstances which have arisen. We cannot expect to find in them a systematic or even complete exposition of St. Paul's teaching. All this is easily confirmed by an even cursory perusal of the Epistles. In particular does this apply to the apostle's written teaching regarding Christ. He is the "Apostle of Christ Jesus" and we may therefore assume that his teaching regarding the person of the Master was the most fully-developed point of his oral doctrine, and therefore would not require further *ex professo* development in his writings to the churches. Indeed, as we shall presently see more fully, his references to Christological doctrines in his Epistles are made only to explain, emphasise or drive home some other point, generally a moral point. Yet even such incidental references are staggering in their sublimity. The Pharisee of Tarsus, well trained in Jewish doctrine and practice according to the "strictest sect"<sup>1</sup> and at the same time no stranger to Greek learning, gives us a theology of Christ which reveals the mysterious implications of the simpler assertions of the Synoptic Gospels.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxvi. 5.

## *The Divinity of Christ*

The purpose of the present paper is to present St. Paul's teaching on the Godhead of Christ.<sup>1</sup> The subject is a vast one and it is not possible to treat it fully in a single paper, but I hope that within necessary limits the treatment will be found to be comprehensive.

We will first consider the following passage from the Epistle to the Romans in which St. Paul explicitly calls Christ God.

For I could wish to be anathema myself from Christ on behalf of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, whose is the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the liturgy and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom was Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen. (ix. 3-5).

The clearness of this text would be obscured by any lengthy comment upon it. Not only is Christ here referred to as "God blessed for ever," but we are told that He "is over all." Nothing, it would seem, could be more clear or explicit. A large number of non-Catholic writers try to destroy the force of the text by saying that a full-stop should be placed after

<sup>1</sup> St. Paul's teaching, as set forth in his Epistles, has for Catholics and for all who admit the inspiration of Scripture the value of God's infallible revealed truth. For those who do not admit the inspiration of Scripture it is simply St. Paul's opinion or, as they often say, his "interpretation" of Christianity.

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σάρκα ("flesh") or after πάντων ("all"). The passage would then read :

. . . . and from whom was Christ according to the flesh. Who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen.

or

. . . . and from whom was Christ according to the flesh who is over all. God blessed for ever. Amen.

The concluding words in both cases would form a doxology. In the first case this would be "Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen!" The sense is then clear only if we change the order of the words and read, "God, who is over all, (be) blessed for ever. Amen!" In the second case the doxology would be "God (be) blessed for ever. Amen!"

It is fortunately easy to show that both of these suggested changes in punctuation are wrong. In the first place the constant testimony of the Fathers and Christian writers is against it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The limits of this essay do not allow me to give proof of this general statement. We may however record the testimony of St. Irenaeus. In Ch. xvi. of his 3rd. Book *Adversus Haereses* to prove that Jesus Christ is God he alleges our text : *Et iterum ad Romanos scribens de Israel, dicit : Quorum patres, et ex quibus Christus secundum carnem, qui est Deus super omnes benedictus in saecula.* The force of the argument from St. Irenaeus is that he adduces this text, and that without comment, to prove that Our Lord is God. The order of the words differs from that of the Greek text of St. Paul and of the Latin Vulgate : it excludes the evasion of the sense by an alteration of punctuation. Most

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The mother-tongue of very many of these writers was Greek, the language in which St. Paul wrote. Secondly, the doxology, or exclamation of praise, which then concludes the passage in both cases, would be of unusual and even ungrammatical wording, since in doxologies of this type (*e.g.*, II. Cor. i. 3), the important word ("blessed") always comes first and we know of no exception to this rule. A doxology too seems quite out of place here, where St. Paul is speaking, and continues after the supposed doxology to speak, of the unfaithfulness of the Jews. Thirdly, if the purpose of the suggested alteration in punctuation is to

probably this is true of the Greek text of St. Irenaeus, but we cannot be absolutely sure of that. The Greek text of this part of St. Irenaeus' work is now lost, and the Latin translation (which is servile in its fidelity) was probably not made until between the years 250 and 350 or 400. That St. Irenaeus alleges Rom. ix. 5 as an evident testimony to the Divinity of Christ is a weighty enough argument for the real meaning of the text. The peculiar value of St. Irenaeus' witness in all matters of doctrine should be borne well in mind. He was born in Asia Minor sometime between 115 and 140 A.D., and we find him later listening to St. Polycarp, the disciple of the Apostles at Smyrna. In the year 177, as a priest of the Church of Lyons, he takes a letter to Pope Eleutherius. As Bishop of Lyons a little later he intervenes as peace-maker in the controversy concerning the date of Easter between the Holy See and the bishops of Asia. He probably died about the year 202. His constant communication with the Church in both East and West and with Rome, coupled with his contact, in Asia Minor, with the disciples of the Apostles, gives his testimony as to Christian teaching and understanding of the sense of Scripture an immense value.



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reduce Christ to the stature of a mere man, it quite fails, for in the first part of Rom. ix. 5 St. Paul speaks of Christ as being of the Jews according to the flesh, thereby declaring that there was something in him that did not follow upon carnal parentage. What this was, *viz.*, His Godhead, we see from the explicit declaration of St. Paul in this and other passages.

One of the reasons brought against the obvious sense of the text we have just been discussing is that St. Paul never calls Jesus Christ God in any other passage. Even if true the argument would have little value. But in point of fact it is false. In the Epistle to Titus (ii. 13) he writes :

Looking for the blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour Christ Jesus.

“ Our great God ” and “ our Saviour Christ Jesus ” are in grammatical apposition, their reference to the same person being therefore unquestionable. The grammatical apposition is clear in the Greek text, in which “ our great God ” is preceded by the definite article, which is omitted before “ Saviour ” as before “ Christ Jesus.”

Thus we may continue to say of Christ with

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St. Paul that He "is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen."

It is an outcome of modern polemic that we must treat another famous declaration of Christ's Divinity in St. Paul in a defensive manner. I refer to the famous words of St. Paul to the Philippians (ii. 6-7) :

Let that mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. For he, though he was by nature God, yet did not set great store on his equality with God : rather he emptied himself by taking the nature of a slave and becoming like unto men.

St. Paul is in this passage exhorting the Philippians to humility :

Do nothing out of contentiousness or vanity, but in lowliness of mind let each think the rest better than himself, let each look, not (merely) to his own interests, but also to those of others (ii. 3-4).

He proposes to them the example of Christ Jesus, who, though God, condescended to come among men as a man and to suffer for obedience sake the ignominious death of the cross. While thus proposing Christ's life on earth as an example of humility, of not seeking one's own glory, St. Paul incidentally asserts with great clearness His divinity : He is "by nature God,"

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and has "equality with God." This is the simple and obvious meaning of the text.<sup>1</sup>

We must now go on to consider the "kenotic" interpretation of this text, which endeavours to undermine Catholic dogma relating to Christ.

The early Reformers made capital of their supposed vindication and exaltation of Christ. It is scarcely surprising therefore that we should find exaggerated statements regarding our Divine Lord coming from Luther. The divine nature of Christ of course cannot be exalted too high, and it is therefore the human nature of Christ which we find misrepresented by Luther. He gives the human nature of Christ a right to the divine attributes, and finds the self-emptying or "kenosis" of the Incarnation in the renunciation of those rights by Christ's human nature. This doctrine of Luther is of course false, but it is not to our purpose directly to refute it here, since it does not deny the divinity of Christ. I wish only to point out how Luther understood the "kenosis" of Philippi. ii. 7,<sup>2</sup> and to remark how very far his modern followers, whose views

<sup>1</sup> Later we shall have to consider the verses which follow as a separate argument.

<sup>2</sup> "Kenosis" is derived from the verb *ἐκένωσεν* (*ekenosen*), "emptied," in this verse.

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we are about to consider, have strayed from his teaching.

The "kenosis" as taught by modern non-Catholic writers is in direct opposition to the primitive Lutheran view. According to them the humiliation or self-abasement of the Incarnation is in the laying aside by the Word of some at least of the divine attributes. In some forms of the theory there is also in Christ a loss of the consciousness of divinity. The classification by Bruce<sup>1</sup> of the forms which the theory has taken since 1850, though made over fifty years ago, still holds good if supplemented with a few remarks. He divides the kenotic views into four classes. First, there is the *absolute dualistic* type. The kenosis is absolute, *i.e.*, the Eternal Word becomes "depotentiated" or deprived of the divine attributes, not only in its hypostatic union to human nature, but also in its life in God: further it is dualistic, *i.e.*, in Christ the Word does not take the place of the human soul, but exists side by side with it. Secondly, we have the *absolute metamorphic* type. This differs from the preceding view in making the Word become the human soul in Christ. Thirdly,

<sup>1</sup> *The Humiliation of Christ* (2nd ed.), Edinburgh, 1881.

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comes the *absolute semi-metamorphic* type. This scarcely differs from the preceding except in insisting that there is not a "depotentialisation" of the Word, but that the Word in Christ could only possess the divine attributes with limitations or in the "time-form" appropriate to a human mode of existence. Fourthly, there is the *real but relative* type. The Word suffers no change in its "cosmic functions," *i.e.*, apart from its life in Christ which is limited. Bruce takes as the principal exponents of these theories respectively Thomasius,<sup>1</sup> Gess,<sup>2</sup> Elbrand,<sup>3</sup> Martensen.<sup>4</sup>

In all of these theories there is a limitation of the divine knowledge and power in Christ. As to Our Lord's consciousness of His divinity the kenotists are not always clear, but they all seem to postulate a unity of consciousness of Christ which they affirm to be human consciousness. If he is conscious of being God also, this consciousness takes, as in Martensen, the form of a

<sup>1</sup> *Christi Person und Werk*, Erlangen, 1856.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Lehre von der Person Christi entwickelt aus dem Selbstbewusstsein Christi und aus den Zeugnisse des Apostel*, Basel, 1856.

<sup>3</sup> *Christliche Dogmatik*, 1851-52.

<sup>4</sup> *Die Christliche Dogmatik*, Berlin, 1856. I have not consulted at first hand the works referred to in this and the three preceding footnotes but have relied on the exposition given by Bruce and in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* (s.v. *kénose*).

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recollection in his human consciousness, or of an awakening to what he was before the Incarnation, as in Gess, according to whom (as we have seen) there is a human soul in Christ apart from the Logos. The question of the divine consciousness in Christ is the psychological crux of the question, the kenosis in other respects being largely a matter of difficult Scripture texts.

There has scarcely been any development of kenotic theory since Bruce wrote. Yet many have gone still further in despoiling Christ. The kenotic theories were but the "base degrees by which they did ascend" to a complete denial of Christ's divinity. In the non-Catholic "Christian" world the liberal theologians of fifty or seventy years ago are the conservatives of to-day.<sup>1</sup> The "advanced" Christological position held even by clerical writers, as I see it, appears to-day to be this: The perfection of moral evolution was reached in Jesus Christ,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gore admits limitations of the knowledge of Our Lord (*Belief in Christ*, pp., 188, 190, 192, 193, 225). In the matter of the divine consciousness of Christ he gives us the choice between "a continual refusal to exercise the free divine consciousness which He possessed" and "something once for all involved in the original act by which He entered into the limiting conditions of manhood" (*ibid*, p. 226). In *Can We Then Believe* (pp. 193-196) Dr. Gore explains his kenotic views at greater length. He appears to take Martensen's view.

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whether or no the human race was then, or is now, ready for such a disclosure. Such moral perfection is the expression of what is best in things and the person possessing it can be given no title less than "God." As I read the signs, this is connected with and is perhaps the result of a doctrine of evolutionistic pantheism.<sup>1</sup>

The ground on which the kenotic views are based must be briefly considered. The Scriptural reasons are of course certain isolated Gospel texts which liberal non-Catholic theologians take as indicating limitations of power and knowledge in Christ.<sup>2</sup>

The exegesis of these texts does not come within the scope of the present paper. Philip. ii. 5-7 is taken by the kenotists as the general expression of the theory, of which the Gospel texts referred to are particular instances. To show that violence is thus being done to Philip. ii. 5-7, we must enter into a somewhat detailed

<sup>1</sup> Only since writing the above have I read in Dr. Gore's *Belief in Christ* (p. 171) a passage, commenting on Anglican Modernists, which expresses the same idea. See also p. 179 and Dr. Barnes' sermon "The Deity of Christ" (preached in Westminster Abbey, Sunday, Sept. 30, 1923) in *Should Such a Faith Offend* pp. 150 seq. Dean Inge explains the Incarnation in a like sense, as it seems to me, in "The Person of Christ," in *Contentio Veritatis* (London, 1916).

<sup>2</sup> Luke ii. 40, 52; Matt. iv. 1-11; Mark vi. 5; xiii. 32; xiv. 35-38.

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defensive explanation of the text. This must centre round the exact meaning of some of the terms of the text.

For he, though he was by nature God (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων) yet he did not set great store (οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο) on his equality with God: rather, he emptied himself, by taking the nature of a slave (μορφὴν δούλου),

*Μορφή* and *σχῆμα*. The first of these terms, which in the *Westminster Version* is rendered by “nature,” and which occurs twice in this passage, originally meant “shape” or “form.” Later it came to mean the intrinsic nature of a thing, and this philosophical meaning passed into the popular language in so far at least as *μορφή*, an objective concept of a thing, was opposed to *σχῆμα*, the external appearance of a thing, not necessarily giving an accurate view of its intrinsic nature. Lightfoot, a great non-Catholic authority, says regarding the sense of *μορφή* in verse 6, that it “must apply to the attributes of the God-head.”<sup>1</sup> and later: “The three clauses imply respectively the true divine nature of Our Lord (*μορφὴ θεοῦ*), the true human nature (*μορφὴ*

<sup>1</sup> St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (4th ed., 1903 reprint), p. 132.



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δούλου) and the externals of the human nature. (σχήματι ὡς ἄνθρωπος)<sup>1</sup>

“Υπάρχων.” The form is the present participle “being,” and as such it covers the time indicated by the aorists which follow, logically at least preceding their action and not necessarily ending with it. This grammatical necessity applied to the whole text shows that it was the divine will of the Word which “set no great store on his equality with God” and “emptied himself by taking the nature of a slave.” Hence as a volition this takes place before the Incarnation, and as the execution of this will of the Word it is the Incarnation itself. The emptying of Himself, the kenosis, is the mere fact of appearing outwardly to mankind as self-despoiled of the splendour of His divine majesty and taking, *besides* the nature of God, the nature also of man. There is no warrant in the text for saying that Our Lord laid aside any of the qualities of His divine nature. On the contrary, the present participle *υπάρχων* being contemporaneous with the various finite aorists in the passage, excludes such an interpretation,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132. The last of the three phrases (σχήματι ὡς ἄνθρωπος) is found at the end of verse 7: “And after he had appeared in outward form as man.”

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since it implies a continued existence ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ in the act of the Incarnation.

Ἀρπαγμόν. This term may be rendered as either "robbery" or "treasure to be greedily retained."<sup>1</sup> The sense cannot be determined with certainty by linguistic evidence; the second sense suits the context best, and is adopted by the *Westminster Version* in rendering the passage, "did not set great store on his equality with God." Neither of the above renderings provides a basis for the kenotists' theories. In a criticism of Gore's *Belief in Christ*, Dean Inge said that some theologian whom he met at Christiania (a providential name for their meeting-place) said that it means "an easy prize to win". Then verse 6 would read "... he thought equality with God was not an easy prize to win." There is no need to go into this singular opinion; it makes nonsense of the passage. Dr. Gore has already sufficiently replied from the linguistic point of view.<sup>2</sup>

The remaining grounds on which the modern kenotic theories rest are two, although regarded as philosophical difficulties, they probably form

<sup>1</sup> I.e., "booty."

<sup>2</sup> See *Can We Then Believe*, pp. 191-192.

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only one. First, personality is consciousness according to the moderns, and if Christ has a divine consciousness and a human consciousness, He is not one but two persons.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, they argue that Christ could not have a true human experience of life if He retained His omnipotence and His omniscience. I have said that these two objections are probably only one philosophically, because the reason for getting rid of Christ's omniscience and omnipotence in order that He may have true human experience seems to me to be identical with the difficulty arising from Christ's consciousness of His divinity.

As to the first of these two reasons, based upon the concept of personality, it is outside the scope of this paper to discuss the question fully and to refute the philosophical error that a person is to be defined as a subject (or object) which is conscious of itself. I can only here state the teaching of the *philosophia perennis* of the Church that a person is an independent individual intellectual substance. For the defence of this definition I must refer my

<sup>1</sup> See (e.g.) R. C. Moberly's *The Incarnation as the Basis of Dogma* in *Lux Mundi* (15th ed., London, 1904), pp. 176-177.

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readers to works of orthodox philosophy. It will readily be seen that if, as can be proved, this is the true concept of personality, this philosophical difficulty regarding the Incarnation disappears. Christ is conscious of His divinity and also of His full intellectual human nature; but there is only one person—the divine person of the Word—since the human nature of Christ is not ontologically independent but is centred in the person of the Word.

The second difficulty, as an intellectual difficulty, is very feeble. It assumes that human experience can only be such if it undergoes *all* the limitations and infirmities which weigh upon us. Yet surely in human nature there are possibilities of perfection which God can bestow without true human experience being thereby made impossible. I feel, however, that this difficulty lies rather in the modern imagination than in the intellect. Human nature for us is a weak, impotent thing, barely able to gather a few scraps of knowledge even in a long lifetime and conscious, if it is wise, of the sea of ignorance which surrounds it. That is human nature and experience as we know it.

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And because the modern mind, so far lapsed from the habit of faith<sup>1</sup>, cannot imagine a human nature without these limitations<sup>2</sup>, it refuses to believe it possible.

In truth the kenotic theory is nothing more than a timid truce with unbelief. If a Christian really believes that Jesus Christ is the Eternal God, he cannot think of Him as God unconscious of His own divinity, or actually divested of divine power and knowledge. Such a thing would be stranger far and more impossibly fantastic than any of the terrifying impossibilities which leapt from the pages of our childhood's fairy tales.

Not only did St. Paul call Christ God, but he frequently gives Him the title *Yahveh*

<sup>1</sup> By faith we accept truth on authority. In the case of the theological virtue of faith we accept what God reveals on His authority, than which there is none higher or more trustworthy. Apart from the strict theological sense of faith, there is a habit of mind which is antecedently ready to accept what may be revealed by God without demanding a positive view of the intrinsic possibility of the matter. The opposite attitude appears to be the characteristic modern mentality. This in passing.

<sup>2</sup> To prevent all possible misunderstanding let me repeat that I am not attributing the divine attributes to Our Lord's human nature, which was limited. But His divine nature did not lose one particle of its attributes or consciousness of Divinity. Moreover the divine omniscience of Christ could not but give to His human intelligence a quasi-infinite knowledge which did not pertain to it by right. This, however, is a question which takes us beyond our present subject.

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which the Jews reserved exclusively for God.<sup>1</sup>  
Let us consider his words in Rom. x. 8-14.

But what saith it? "The word is nigh to thee, it is in thy mouth and in thy heart"—that is to say, the word of faith which we preach, even that if thou confess with thy mouth Jesus for Lord, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto justness, and with the mouth doth confess unto salvation. Even so saith the scripture, "No one that believeth in him shall be put to shame." There is no distinction of Jew and Greek; for there is the same Lord of all, rich unto all that call upon him. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." How then are they to call upon him in whom they have not believed?

<sup>1</sup> In Exodus iii. 14. we read "God said to Moses, I am ('*Ehyeh*) who am ('*Ehyeh*)! And he said: Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: I am ('*Ehyeh*) hath sent me to you. And God said again to Moses: These things shalt thou say to the children of Israel: *Yahveh* ('He is') the God of your fathers . . . hath sent me to you: this is my name for ever." Scholars are agreed that *Yahveh* (3rd person) and '*Ehyeh* (1st person) are derived in the text from the Hebrew verb which means, "to be," and that the terms have the same meaning, God applying it to Himself in the one case and its being applied to Him by others in the second. Both are in the imperfect, but it must be borne in mind that this does not mean the same as in classic or modern languages. In Hebrew the perfect denotes definite past time, the imperfect generally indicating continuous time which may be past, present or future. So sacred was this name of God that the Jews would not pronounce it when reading the Scriptures. They read the name '*Adonai* instead, and when the vowel points were inserted in the Hebrew MSS. of the Scriptures, the vowel points of '*Adonai* were inserted under the consonants of *Yahveh*, thus producing *Yehovah*, which was long considered the correct pronunciation of this sacred name of the Jews for God. In the Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament *Yahveh* was rendered as *κύριος* (*Dominus* in the Latin, and "Lord" in the English versions). Writing in Greek, St. Paul uses this same

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Here the sum of the Christian faith is laid down as believing that Christ is the Lord (κύριος) and that God raised him from the dead (verse 9). It is clear that the apostle in this passage gives to κύριος the meaning of *Yahveh*, for in verses 12-14 he alleges Joel ii. 32 (which asserts the necessity of calling upon *Yahveh*) to show the necessity of calling upon the name of Christ: this would be sheer blasphemy were Christ not *Yahveh*. Hence, too, it is of Christ as *Yahveh* that he says in verse 12 that He is "the same Lord of all, rich unto all that call upon him."

A similar passage is Philip ii. 9-11.<sup>1</sup>

Wherefore God hath exalted him above the highest, and hath bestowed on him the name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus "every knee should bend" in heaven, on earth, and under the earth and that "every tongue should confess" that "Jesus Christ is Lord," to the glory of God the Father.

As regards this text, a preliminary remark is

term κύριος of Christ. This of itself, of course, proves nothing, for the word κύριος unlike the sacred Hebrew name *Yahveh*, was not reserved exclusively for Almighty God, even in the Septuagint. It is much like the English word "lord" or "master," and like these is applied over and over again to mere men. It is from the context that we gather that St. Paul gives the word the sense of *Yahveh* when he applies it to Christ.

<sup>1</sup> The preceding verses from the beginning of the chapter are dealt with earlier.

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necessary regarding the meaning of the word ὄνομα, "name". Its import is not restricted to the usual meaning of the English "name", *i.e.*, a word indicating an individual, although it includes this. Thus the opening words of verse 10 are not to be taken as meaning that "Jesus" as a proper name is "the name which is above every name". Many others besides Our Lord were called Jesus. The meaning evidently is that "every knee should bend", or render homage, to the dignity of the person of Jesus Christ. Thus reverence is due to Him from all "in heaven, on earth, and under the earth". From this it follows that, when in verse 11, Jesus is said to be "Lord", this dignity is of "lordship" in a universal sense. Hence "the name which is above every name", *i.e.*, *Yahveh*, is by the divine decree of the Incarnation given by God to Jesus Christ. In other words He is true substantial God, united to a human nature.

Let us pass from these passages in which Jesus is called God, and is hailed as *Yahveh* of awful majesty, to a famous passage in which St. Paul attributes to Him that which we know to be the work and attribute of God



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alone, namely the creation, and which we know to be beyond the power of any creature no matter how great. In Coloss. i. 15-17 we read :

Now he is the image of the unseen God, first-born before every creature. For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, whether thrones or dominations or principalities or powers—all creation is through him and unto him. And himself is prior to all, and in him all things hold together.

Here the person of Christ—God's "beloved son in whom we have redemption" (i. 13-14) is definitely distinct from all created things, for "all creation is through him" (16) and "himself is prior to all" (17). His is the work of creation—"for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth" (16).

We find the same idea in a more compendious form in 1 Cor. viii. 6 :

For us [there is only] one God, the Father, from whom [come] all things, and for whom we [live] ; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom [come] all things, and through whom we [live].

It may be objected with regard to both of these passages that creation is attributed to God the Father *through* the Son, and that the Son is, therefore, not the Creator. But without having recourse to other texts already discussed it is

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clear from Colloss. i. 15-17 that Christ is decidedly not a creature. Hence even if St. Paul appears to attribute an instrumental *rôle* to Christ in the work of creation (1 Cor. viii. 6), it is so in appearance only, for God is one and in the act of creation—the production of contingent beings out of nothing—there evidently can be no question of any instrumental agent, for such an agent would have no matter to act upon. Hence the different relations of creation to God the Father and to “his beloved Son” do not imply an absence of creative power (or action) in the Son, but rather lead us into the deeper mysteries of God’s own divine life within Himself, where in the ever-blessed Trinity the three Divine Persons exist, without inequality in an unfathomable majesty.<sup>1</sup>

I have already set forth at some length representative texts, taken from different parts of St. Paul’s writings, containing his teaching as to the divine personality of Our Lord. To consider many more would scarcely add cogency to the argument. Let one more very clear

<sup>1</sup> The objection is really one of Subordinationism against the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, which we are not here considering. As regards creation Catholic teaching holds that actually every operation done by God outside himself is effected equally by all three Persons of the Trinity.

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testimony suffice before concluding. In Coloss. ii. 8-9 the apostle writes :

See to it that there be no man making you his spoil by force of his philosophy and deceitful fancies, following the traditions of men, following the elements of the world, and not following Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporally.

Nothing could be more explicit than the declaration of Christ's Godhead contained in these last words. The fulness of the Godhead is in Christ. Nothing short of a glaring misrepresentation of St. Paul's plain meaning can destroy the force and value of this text.<sup>1</sup>

I would like the conclusion of this paper to be the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews—without any comment. No more beautiful or sublime expression of Christ's Godhead seems possible. He is the Son of God (i. 5.) : even the angels must adore Him (6) : He is God (8-9) : He is *Yahveh*, the unchanging Creator of changing things (10-12).

<sup>1</sup> The English "Godhead" is a more accurate rendering of the Greek *θεοτης* than is the Latin *divinitatis*, which is used by the Vulgate. "Divinity" might be urged to mean "Godhead" by participation (which could not be real Godhead), but no such meaning can be put upon the term "Godhead" by itself, without any qualification. All possible doubt is removed by the use of the term "the fulness of the Godhead." The meaning of the term "corporally" is very much disputed, but all suggested explanations give substantially the same meaning to the text.

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We do not speak of something that is past, but of one in which and for which we live : because “ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea, and for ever ” (Heb. xiii. 8).

### III

## THE CHURCH

WHEN Almighty God chose the people of the Jews to be His servants and to worship Him in a special manner, He called them out, distinguished them, that is, from among all the nations of the world. And they regarded themselves accordingly, and described themselves, as His outcalling—in Greek, His *ekklesia*. The Jews as a nation were to stand in a unique relation to Him, with certain promises on His part, certain obligations on theirs ; He was to be their God and they were to be His people. And when you find the Jewish people described in the Old Testament as “ the assembly ” or “ the congregation ”, those words are simply English equivalents of the word *ekklesia*, “ the outcalling ”. In Saint Stephen’s speech in the Acts of the Apostles you will find the same word in the same connection translated “ the Church ” ; “ the Church in the wilderness ” means simply the assembled people which had

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been called by Almighty God out of Egypt to serve Him.

The Hebrew prophet who foretold the coming of a Messiah announced that He would save a remnant of His people ; not the whole of them, it seemed, only a remnant. In fact, there was to be a further selection within the selection already made, a fresh calling out, in which some of the Jews would have no part. It was this prophecy that our Lord claimed to fulfil when He came to baptise, or rather came and empowered His apostles to baptise. This rite of baptism was to seal men and women as the members of a new movement. It was a movement which He ordinarily described as “ the Kingdom of God ” or “ the kingdom of heaven ”. But twice—only twice, I think, in His recorded utterances—He refers to it as an *ekklesia*, and on one of those occasions, in His famous commission to St. Peter, He actually uses the phrase “ My church ”. His *ekklesia*, His outcalling—it was to be a further selection from, and an improvement upon, the old *ekklesia* or congregation of God.

This term, *ekklesia*, which our Lord Himself would seem to have used sparingly, and per-

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haps only as part of His more intimate teaching, became, nevertheless, almost from the first the official designation by which the Christian body referred to itself. It occurs about fifty times in the writings of St. Paul, and evidently as a term which will be understood, which will pass muster without challenging question. I want to try and examine to-night, as if we had no other evidence to go by, as if the history of Christianity threw no light on the subject from the outside, what sort of institution was in St. Paul's mind when he used this word, *ekklesia*, how it was constituted and how it was organised. I shall pay no attention this evening to the Epistle to the Hebrews, because there are many Protestant critics who consider that it was not written by St. Paul, and evidence derived from it would be disallowed by them in consequence. We will confine our attention to the letters which he dashed off, sometimes obviously in a hurry, to his friends, his converts, or his fellow-Christians who were living at a distance and needed his encouragement, his correction, or his advice.

Fifty times in the course of those few letters—it is obvious that the word “ Church ” was one

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which came easily to St. Paul's lips. Sometimes you would even be inclined to say that he was dragging the word in as something he is proud of—when, for example, he commits his converts to the care of Almighty God, and adds, "To him be glory in the church, and in Christ Jesus", as if the Church were the normal channel or organ through which all human praise must be offered to God. People will sometimes talk as if the Church, in St. Paul's mind, was first and foremost a local affair, a collection of Christians in a particular town or a particular district. I do not think that that is true. For he will not merely refer to the church which is at Corinth or the churches which are in Judaea; he will use such phrases as "Salute Aristobulus and the church which is in his household". Surely it is very improbable that in those early days a single household can have formed a separate, independent ecclesiastical unit. No, I think for St. Paul the Church was something all-embracing, like the air which surrounds us. You can talk about the air at Nairn or the air at Strathpeffer, but you know that it is all one with the air you breathe at Aberdeen. So it is with the Church in St.



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Paul's writings ; wherever there are Christians, and more particularly wherever there are Christians gathered together for worship, there this wonderful fact, the Church, is in existence. For purposes of convenience the word must have a plural—after all, it had to do duty for what we mean by a congregation as well as for what we mean by the Church. But essentially it is a single and unique fact, present wherever men have learned to lift up holy hands to God.

And when he is not directing his attention to merely local affairs, he always speaks of the Church in language which expresses a profound conviction of its unity—of the oneness which the faithful already enjoy, in virtue of their common calling, of the oneness which they ought to enjoy, if they will live, as they ought to live, in constant mutual charity. He expresses this idea of unity under three separate images, when he speaks of the Church as a building which is held in place by its adhesion to Christ, as a Body of which Christ is the Head, and as a Bride whom Christ has espoused to Himself. Among man's contrivances, nothing expresses the idea of solidarity so well as the notion of architecture. In Nature, there is no whole so

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perfectly related to its parts as the marvellous organisation of the human body. In the world of sentiment, there is no unity so close as that formed by the love of a man and a woman. St. Paul dwells on each of these images in turn.

First, then, the Church is regarded as a building. It is worth while remembering that this description, which sounds so natural to us—accustomed as we are to describing by that name any edifice designed for the worship of God—was far less natural in St. Paul's day, when Christians worshipped as best they could, in private houses, or sometimes in dark subterranean passages for fear of persecution. We Christians, St. Paul says, are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the corner-stone, in whom all the building is duly fitted together and groweth up into a temple holy in the Lord ; in whom ye also are being built together into a spiritual dwelling-place of God, (Ephes. ii. 20-22)." It is quite true that each of us ought to think of his body as a temple of God, the chosen habitation of the Holy Spirit ; but that is not all. It would be wrong to imagine that each of us is a lonely individual, with a lonely spiritual life

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related only to God Himself. No, Christians merely as Christians are necessarily related to one another ; the whole body of the faithful is itself a temple on an enormous scale, and in that great edifice you and I and all Christians are just so many stones, so many pieces of moulding, so many architectural features. The Christian finds himself, achieves his salvation, not as a lonely unit but as an integral part of a vast architectural design. To be a Christian and to be a Churchman is all one thing, not two separate things.

Elsewhere, by a slight variation of the same architectural metaphor, St. Paul writes a letter of pastoral advice to St. Timothy, his own convert whom he has left in charge of the faithful at Ephesus, with the object, he says, " that thou mayest know how to conduct thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and stay of the truth " (1 Tim. iii. 15). Here, you see, he is no longer thinking of the Church as a structure which supports, by the careful disposition of its various parts, the weight of its own mass. He is thinking of it as a substructure, capable of supporting the weight of something outside itself, and that something

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is the tradition of the Catholic faith. In the very earliest days, when the Christian message was preached in great part by men who had actually had speech with our Lord and been witnesses of His marvellous works, men did not trouble themselves much to consider what was the intellectual ground upon which they justified themselves in believing what they believed. But as the years went on, and those earliest witnesses were removed by death or distance, heretical tendencies arose, and men began to ask themselves what was the true rule of faith according to which they ought to regulate their theological outlook. St. Paul appeals, and directs St. Timothy to appeal, to the tradition of the universal Church. That is the pillar by which religious truth is supported, the socket in which it rests. By the cohesion of its world-wide membership the Church supports the strain of intellectual responsibility which is imposed upon it by its duty of preaching final and absolute religious truth.

So much for the architectural image ; the metaphor taken from the human body is in itself far more natural, far less surprising. When St. Paul finds or fears disunion among his con-

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verts, when there seems to be a danger that those spiritual gifts which were so freely showered upon the early Church will lead to quarrels and rivalries among their recipients, his favourite expedient is to remind them that they are all one body. The man who can prophesy is not to regard himself as more important than the man who can speak with tongues ; nor are both alike to despise some fellow-Christian who has capacities of a lower order, who merely teaches, for example, or helps in Church administration. All alike are to remember that all alike are necessary to the general well-being of the Church, just as all the different limbs of the human body, with their different functions, are necessary to the well-being of that body. So far, there is nothing very sensational about the metaphor; it is one which naturally presents itself to the mind, and was indeed used by a Roman statesman on a famous occasion, to allay a dispute among his fellow-countrymen, long before the time of Christ. No, the distinctive thing about St. Paul's use of the same metaphor is that he always insists, sometimes goes out of his way to insist, that the Church is a Body of which Christ is

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the Head, of which the Holy Spirit is the organising Principle. Nor is it to be supposed that our Lord is the head of the Church merely in some legal and interpretative sense ; He is essential to its life as a body. “ The head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, welded and compacted together . . . maketh increase unto the building up of itself in love ” (Ephes. iv. 15-16)—the Church derives from him, not merely some sort of political unity, but its whole internal principle of growth.

If one member of the body suffers, all the members suffer with it—there again is a notion which it did not need a Christian preacher to enunciate. But the mystical unity of Christ’s Church is something which goes even deeper than this. “ I make up ”, St. Paul writes to the Colossians, “ I make up in my flesh what is lacking to the sufferings of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the Church ” (Colos. i. 24). If that text means anything at all, it can only mean that the sufferings which St. Paul undergoes for the sake of Christ and in union with His sufferings have a merit, an atoning efficacy, which redounds to the advantage of the whole Church, which is Christ’s Body. It would be

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difficult to imagine any conception of the supernatural solidarity which exists between Christians more far-reaching and more significant than this. The Church which suffers when Paul suffers, merits what Paul merits.

The third metaphor, that which represents the Church as the Bride of Christ, is already implied in the letter to the Corinthians, but is stated at full length only in the letter to the Ephesians. The apostle directs wives to be subject to their husbands, because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is of the Church; husbands to love their wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing (Ephes. v. 22-27). The interesting point to notice, I think, about that argument, is that he puts it the opposite way round to what you would expect. He does not appeal to human marriage as illustrating the doctrine of the Church, he appeals to the doctrine of the Church as illustrating the nature of human marriage. He does not suggest that the love of a husband for a wife will give us some idea of the way in which Christ loves His Church. He

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suggests that the way in which Christ loves His Church will give us some idea of the love which a husband ought to feel towards his wife. He does not imply that Christ can only have one Church just as a husband only has one wife ; he implies that a husband can only have one wife just as Christ can only have one Church. In a word, he does not argue, does not labour to prove his doctrine about the Church ; he assumes it as something known, something admitted, from which he can proceed to the proof of something else. The images of the building and of the body show how profoundly St. Paul was convinced of the unity of the Church. The image of the bride shows, *à plus fort raison*, how profoundly he was convinced of the uniqueness of the Church. One husband, one wife ; one Christ, one Church of Christ.

I hope I have said enough to show that St. Paul, however much his authority may have been appealed to by Protestants in support of their polemical position, emphasised the doctrine of the Church, dwelt upon it deliberately, thought of the individual Christian as saved, not by some lonely individual process, but by his membership of a body. It remains to be con-



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sidered whether the theory of the Church which St. Paul held was the Catholic or the Protestant theory. For there are only two possible theories of the Church, when all is said and done. Either the one Church is an organised body, with a duly constituted ministry, with external sacraments, with a membership partly consisting of people who are Christians in name, but will not persevere in goodness and attain eternal life—in which case we Catholics are in the right of it, for we are the only people who can even point to the existence of such a church as the conception demands. Or Protestantism is right, the old historical Protestantism is right, and the Church is not a visible, organised body at all. It is simply the total muster of those souls, their names and their number known only to God, who, whatever the denominations to which they were attached, will in the end attain the glories of heaven. It was only because they had such a conception of what the Church meant that these old-fashioned Protestants, the people who really used to believe in the Bible, could justify St. Paul's repeated references to the Church as the temple, the body, and the Bride of Christ. Now, as a matter of fact, which theory of the

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Church did St. Paul hold? The Catholic theory, or the Protestant theory? An important point, clearly, for us modern Christians to decide.

I believe that there can be no reasonable doubt as to what the apostle's mind was in this matter. In his second Epistle to St. Timothy, after alluding to certain heterodox teachers who, even at that early date in Christian history, were subverting the faith of some, he writes: "In a large house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, and some indeed unto honour, but some unto dishonour" (II Tim. ii. 20). What can the House be in the application of this allegory but the House of God, the name which in the first Epistle to St. Timothy he had given to the Church of Christ? And what can the vessels of dishonour be but souls not predestined to eternal life—the very illustration he has previously used in the Epistle to the Romans?

The same lesson is taught, less directly perhaps but not less unmistakably, in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, composed at a considerably earlier date. In warning the Corinthians against the peril of relapsing into idolatry,

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St. Paul has a long passage which draws a parallel between their position and that of the Israelites under the old dispensation. The Israelites, he says, were all baptised in the Red Sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, the manna which was sent from heaven, and all drank the same spiritual drink, the water which was miraculously brought out of the rock ; and yet with some of them God was not well pleased, and they perished in the wilderness. Wherefore, he concludes, he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall (1 Cor. x. 2-12). The bearing of this comparison is not far to seek. The apostle is comparing the position of the Jewish Church under the old dispensation with that of the Christian Church under the new. This new congregation of God is recruited, like the old, by a passage through water ; it is strengthened for its journeyings, like the old, by a miraculous supply of Food and Drink ; Christians are separated from the world once for all by baptism, fortified in their profession with the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, and even so their salvation is not assured, even so it is possible for them to fall away and be lost. Is it not evident that what St. Paul says here is meant to

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apply to the Church as he knew it ; to warn the new *ekklesia* by the example of the old ? And if so, the Church in St. Paul's sense is not a collection of people united by the destiny which marks them out for eternal life. It is a body of people united here and now by their common allegiance to the principles of a visible, organised Church, some of whom nevertheless will fall short of their vocation and will lose their souls.

A visible, organised Church—the Christian body of and for which St. Paul writes—is not an ideal entity, it is an association of persons in being here and now. And I sometimes think that if we could read the New Testament with fresh eyes, coming upon it suddenly as if for the first time, we should be astonished to find how highly-organised, how completely institutional is this church that has only been in existence for about a quarter of a century even at the time when the later epistles were written. I do not mean simply that it has an organised hierarchy. It *has* an organised hierarchy ; St. Timothy is urged to stir up in himself the gift which is in him through the laying on of the hands of the presbyters ; and he himself is directed to appoint presbyters in every church. But this

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organised ministry is something which St. Paul takes for granted rather than something which he emphasises ; when he divides up Christians into their various ranks we hear not of bishops, priests, and deacons, but of prophets, of those who spoke with tongues, of teachers, and so on—in a word, St. Paul insists rather on the special graces granted to individuals than to the powers which resided in various officials in virtue of their state. And this is natural, for it was in the possession of these personal gifts that he foresaw as I have explained, a danger of disunion among the faithful. The institutional hierarchy was there, that is certain, but it is quite possible that for the moment it was overshadowed in importance by the supernatural gifts which at that time were accorded to certain Christians, and were destined before long to be withdrawn.

What ought more to surprise us about the organisation of the infant church is the existence, even then, of a developed system of ecclesiastical authority. We see it, to be sure, only in glimpses, but its presence is unmistakable. I think all of us who have read St. Paul's epistles with any care must have been struck with the curious want of discipline in the church of those

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days—the way in which he is always having to correct the most elementary errors in doctrine, the most elementary abuses in matters of morality. But the tone of authority in which he does so never for a moment hesitates, never for a moment compromises. And there are occasions upon which, it seems, this apostolic authority can be delegated to others. One of the Corinthian converts has outraged the most obvious principles of morality and decency; the other Christians have written, it seems, in some uncertainty about the attitude they ought to take up. St. Paul replies, not merely by directing them to fulminate an excommunication against the offender in the name of the Church, but by reproaching them for not having done so already, in his own absence. It is clear then that even in the absence of an apostle there was, at that early date, recognised machinery in existence for the correction of such abuses. The judicial authority of the Church was already in being.

Another glimpse, from the same epistle. Some dispute has arisen over what seems to us a rather trifling point, namely whether women should be obliged to keep their heads veiled in the Christian assembly. St. Paul replies that

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they should, supporting his argument with reasons which are still dark to the most confident of his commentators. And then at the end of his paragraph, as if he felt that he had been wasting his time in discussing the matter at all, he adds, "But if anyone is minded to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither have the churches of God." (1 Cor. xi. 16). *We have no such custom*—as if the Christian tradition was already an immemorial tradition, instead of dating back twenty years to its origin. *Nor the churches of God*—those little, scattered settlements of Christians around the shores of the Levant are developing, even now, the imperial instincts of Catholic Christendom.

In a word, the Church was to St. Paul what the Church is to us—a collection of human beings, needing, as any collection of human beings will, to be governed by authority and corrected by discipline, yet at the same time a supernatural fact of sublime beauty and of infinite importance—a God had died to ransom it. When he was at liberty, St. Paul would shrink from no labours to extend its influence ; when he was a prisoner, he would offer his sufferings to God on its behalf. To the end he would regard himself as the chief

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of sinners, because he had persecuted the Church of God. In that Church, so hated once, he had come to recognise nothing less than the Body of Christ, the fulness of him who filleth all in all.



## IV

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST

**T**WENTY years after Christ's Last Supper St. Paul taught Christians at Corinth how to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Some five years later, dismayed at the news that the Eucharist was being celebrated with unworthy preparation he wrote 1 Corinthians xi. 17-34. In this passage he repeats, incidentally, what he had taught orally five years previously, namely how the Eucharist had been instituted by Christ. In concluding the passage he promises to give further direction on minor matters connected with the celebration when he pays his next visit to Corinth. The letter was written from Ephesus, where, presumably, the Eucharist was being celebrated with befitting decorum.

In the New Testament, while the sixth chapter of St. John gives most fully the theology of the Eucharist, while Matthew, Mark and Luke, equally with St. Paul, give the record of the institution, we are indebted to this eleventh

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chapter of I Corinthians for the clearest description of the celebration of the Eucharist in the early Church. Further, in point of time of writing, the passage in I Corinthians is in all probability the earliest. We shall examine later the teaching in this and in other passages taken from the letters of St. Paul. Before this can be done, however, there are certain fundamental questions concerning the origin of that teaching which must be answered. These questions are (1) Is the "Lord's Supper" St. Paul's invention? If this is excluded, (2) Is it possible that St. Paul transformed a simple farewell supper given by Christ into a sacramental institution, and, on his own authority, ordered that it be celebrated in the Church until the second advent of Christ? (3) Granted that the institution and the command for perpetual celebration came from Christ, did St. Paul elaborate the original Supper by adding to it accretions borrowed from the heathen mystery-religions that were flourishing in the provinces in which he preached the Gospel?

(1) The idea that Paul invented or originated the Lord's Supper is ruled out simply by the evidence of Matthew, Mark, Luke (and John).

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The rationalist who argues that Luke was taught by Paul, and that the writer of the Fourth Gospel worked on Pauline ideas, has yet to explain how Peter (through Mark) and Matthew, two of the Twelve who were with Jesus on the night on which He was betrayed, could possibly have accepted this supposed Pauline hallucination.

(2) The modernist who denies that Christ ever said "Do this" to His apostles, and who thinks that a simple farewell supper given by Christ to His friends, when He realised that His arrest was imminent, was taken by Paul and altered to a sacramental and sacrificial meal, fails to notice that according to all the evidence the supper itself sinks into insignificance before the great act that took place during and after the meal, when Christ blessed bread and wine and gave to His apostles His Body and Blood.

(3) But if neither the institution nor the continual celebration of the Eucharist can, even by a shadow of argument, be shown to have originated in the mind of St. Paul, is it nevertheless possible that he elaborated the original rite by accretions derived from the mystery-religions? In order to answer this question one has only to keep in mind the real St. Paul. By birth, education and

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devotion Paul was a Hebrew of Hebrews, an Israelite, one of the seed of Abraham, a Pharisee thoroughly conversant with the Jewish religion (Gal. i. 13, 14 ; II Cor. xi. 22). Even after his conversion to Christ he so loved his people that

I could wish to be anathema myself from Christ on behalf of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, whose is the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the legislation and the liturgy and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom was Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen. (Rom. ix. 3-5, *Westminster Version*).

The question, therefore, resolves itself into this. Did this zealous Hebrew, who became an ardent Christian, go a step further and become semi-pagan, at least in some of his ideas ? And did he lead convert Jews at Corinth and elsewhere to adopt rites borrowed from pagans ? A ready answer will be given by anyone who has made a careful study of St. Paul and his theology. Yet, that Paul the Jewish Pharisee and Christian Missioner became semi-pagan, at least in some of his doctrines, is what the latest modernism virtually demands.

A full discussion of the mystery-religions with their secret and sensational initiations, their magical formulae, their impure rites, their gross

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symbolism, etc., would take us beyond the limits of this paper. Further, such discussion has already been done adequately by a number of scholars. The reader may consult, among others, Jacquier, *Les mystères païens et St. Paul* (*Dict. Apologétique*, III, col. 964-1011); M. J. Lagrange, O.P. (in *Revue Biblique*, 1919, pp. 157-217, 419-480; 1920, pp. 420-446; 1929, pp. 63-81, 201-214); Prat, *The Theology of St. Paul* (Eng. Tr., II, pp. 383-390); Groton (in *Dictionary of Apostolic Church*, II, pp. 49-62); Windle, *Catholic Rites and Pagan Customs* (C.T.S. 1928); etc. Here we may say in brief (1) that documents relative to the mystery-religions are, for the most part, later than the time of St. Paul: (2) that superficial resemblances never prove dependency: (3) that it has yet to be demonstrated that any of the characteristic terms of the mystery-religions were employed as such by St. Paul<sup>1</sup>; (4) that the strict secrecy of these religions (so opposed to the universality of the Gospel) precluded any pious Jew or Christian from witnessing the rites.

We need spend no time in refuting those who

<sup>1</sup> ἐμβαρεύων in Col. II. 18 is possibly an exception. See Ramsay, *Teaching of St. Paul*, pp. 287 ff., and Moulton and Milligan *Vocabulary of Greek Testament*, *sub voce*.

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have a mania for discovering " magic " in Pauline (and later Christian) theology. The whole idea of magic in the mystery-religions was to compel or command the god to do this or that whether he willed or not. No act, of course, can be magical in itself ; magic only enters in with the intention of the person performing the act. The one idea of St. Paul and of his fellow-Christians was to do the Will of God on earth as it is in heaven. To do something because Christ said " Do this " is to do something the very reverse of magic. Indeed there is no more magic in celebrating the Eucharist than in observing one of the Ten Commandments of Sinai.<sup>1</sup>

To return then to the real St. Paul. What we really know is that this apostle of the Gentiles, this convert Pharisee, was most scrupulous not to add an iota to the Gospel of Christ. There was some disagreement between him and other converted Pharisees (Acts xv. 5) concerning " the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles " <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The latest form of this obsession is to find " magic " throughout the Old Testament. Such, for example, is the procedure of Prof. Lods, *Du Rôle des Idées Magiques dans la Mentalité Israélite* (in *Old Testament Essays*, 1927).

<sup>2</sup> The phrase must be taken as a whole.

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(Gal. ii. 2), that is, Christianity without circumcision and the works of the Law. But that this Gospel should not transgress what was taught by "the recognised leaders" he came (in spite of the fact that he had received his apostleship and revelations from the Lord) to Jerusalem to have an important interview<sup>1</sup> (which lasted a fortnight) with Peter. Later he conferred with "the recognised leaders" lest "I should have run in vain." They, however, passed his doctrine as the genuine doctrine of Christ, and "added nothing" to it. This gospel preached among the Gentiles was therefore complete. If an angel from heaven should teach otherwise, let him be anathema (Gal. i. 8, 18; ii. 6).

Further, towards Paganism as such this apostle, who studiously avoided introducing any human element into the Gospel for the purpose of persuading men (Gal. i. 10-12), had nothing short of abhorrence. His mission among the Gentiles was to free them from being enslaved "to them that in reality are not gods" (Gal. iv. 8) and from "the elements of the world" (Col. ii. 8). His attitude towards Paganism is seen in Romans i. 18-32; in his horror at the worship

<sup>1</sup> ἱστορήσαι (Gal. i. 18).

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of himself at Lystra (Acts xiv. 13-17); in his sermon based on the altar *To the Unknown God* at Athens (Acts xvii. 23ff), followed by his resolution to teach at Corinth simply "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (I Cor. ii. 2); in his loathing of pagan sacrifices and communions (I Cor. x. 19-22); in his contemptuous reference to the mutilations practised by the priests of Cybele (Gal. v. 12). In a special passage he shows the utter incompatibility between Christian and pagan religion. The two are opposed as justice to injustice, light to darkness, Christ to Belial, so that the Christian can have no part with the pagan, and agreement between the temple of God and that of idols is out of all question (II Cor. vi. 14-16). In one place where he definitely alludes to the "mystery" of the Faith, his purpose is to show how irreconcilable it is to the wisdom of this world (I Cor. ii. 6, 7). In fine, Paganism could lend nothing to the Gospel—the two are poles asunder.

St. Paul was not the man to borrow from what he detested.<sup>1</sup> His borrowing, as he insists

<sup>1</sup> A parallel would be the Catholic Church borrowing from Masonic rites. Masonry with its secrets, its initiation, its strange rites, its exclusiveness, etc., is the nearest approach we have to-day to the old mystery-religions.



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again and again, was solely from the revelation of Christ ; whether directly or indirectly (that is, through the other apostles) does not concern us here.<sup>1</sup> The origin of the Eucharist, therefore, as taught by St. Paul is where he says it is : “ I have received from the Lord, as I also delivered to you ” (I Cor. xi. 23).

Now that this origin has been ascertained, we may proceed to inquire what Christ taught St. Paul about the Eucharist.

Before we examine the Pauline passages on the Eucharist, it will be well to say a few words on Jewish terminology ; for before we can appreciate the doctrine we must get back, not to the mentality of the reformers of the sixteenth century, nor to that of their subsequent modernisers, but to the mental atmosphere of the first century A.D. In other words we must recapture the linguistic idiom of those who heard Jesus. What, for example, was conveyed to their minds by such expressions as “ eat my flesh,” “ drink blood,” “ do this,” “ memorial,” “ new covenant,” “ cup of blessing ” ?

<sup>1</sup> For the two opinions see (*e.g.*) on the one hand, Prat, *Theology of St. Paul*, I. p. 124 (in favour of direct revelation), and, on the other, Batiffol, *Études d'Histoire (deuxième série, pp. 5, 6.)*

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The first of these expressions does not occur in St. Paul, but where he speaks of eating without distinguishing that it is the Lord's Body (1 Cor. xi. 29) he implies "eat my flesh" as given in the Gospel (John vi. 52ff). Now to the Jews who listened to Christ this expression had two well-known meanings, one literal, the other metaphorical. The literal meaning was simply to eat real flesh: the metaphorical meaning might be compared with our English "backbite." This semitic metaphor is found, for example, in Ps. xxvi., (Heb. 27) 2, where the evil-doers draw nigh to "eat my flesh"; in Ps. xiii., (Heb. 14) 4, where the enemies of the Psalmist "eat my people as they eat bread"; in Job xix. 22, where the sufferer asks when will his persecutors have had their fill of his flesh; in Micheas iii. 3, where the prophet complains of bad rulers who "eat the flesh of my people"; in Daniel iii. 8 and vi. 24, where "to eat pieces of" means slander. Hence to the Jewish mind to eat a person's flesh, in the figurative sense, could only mean to calumniate or persecute him. Obviously, therefore, Christ spoke in no figurative sense when He instituted the Eucharist, the

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revelation of which St. Paul handed on to the Corinthians.<sup>1</sup>

When Christ bade His apostles : “ Drink . . . my blood ” He would, but for His previous instruction (John vi.), have shocked their Jewish susceptibilities to the utmost. A Jew to drink blood ! As well as a Catholic child knows what is implied by “ eating meat on Friday ” so was the Jew, from childhood, impressed by the prohibition of drinking blood. “ For the life is in the blood.” The first pious Jews to drink blood were the apostles of Christ. They did so, because “ the life is in the blood,” and so in order to communicate with the life of Christ, eternal life, they drank the sacred blood. The texts to consult are many : Gen. ix. 4 ; 1 Sam. xiv. 32 ; Lev. iii. 17 ; vii. 26, 27 ; xvii. 10 ff. ; xix. 26 ; Deut. xii. 16, 23, 24 ; xv. 23 ; Exec. xxxiii. 25 ; Judith xii. 12. In another place I have dealt with this point more at length.<sup>2</sup> I may simply add that if any of the words of Christ were not to

<sup>1</sup> This matter of Jewish phraseology is admirably discussed in Cardinal Wiseman’s *Lectures on the Real Presence*, in the second of which lectures the reader will see how in Arabic also “ to eat the flesh of a person ” means figuratively to calumniate him.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Religion of the Scriptures, papers from the Catholic Bible Congress held at Cambridge, July, 1921* ; ed. 3, pp. 40-44 (Heffey, Cambridge).

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be taken literally by His hearers, the command " Drink my blood " above all others demanded explanation from the lips of the divine Master.

On St. Paul's authority we know that after consecrating the bread and wine Christ gave a command to His apostles : " Do this." The Council of Trent has a definition on this passage: " If anyone say that by the words ' Do this in remembrance of me,' Christ did not constitute His apostles priests, or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His Body and Blood, let him be anathema " (Sess. xxii. can. 2). Now, although this definition does not rest simply on the precise meaning of the word ποιέιτε (" do "), yet the fact is overlooked, especially by non-Catholic commentators, that the simple word " do " is quite commonly used both in Hebrew and in Greek with the meaning " sacrifice." We will give twenty-six examples in which the italic word is, in the Hebrew and Greek texts, simply " do."

Exod. x. 25. " Moses said, Thou must also give into our hand sacrifices and burnt-offerings, that we may *sacrifice* to Yahwè our God."

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Exod. xxix. 41. "And the other lamb thou shalt *sacrifice* in the evening."

Lev. xiv. 19. "And the priest shall *offer* the sin-offering."

30. "And he shall *sacrifice* one of the turtle-doves."

xv. 15. "And the priest shall *offer* them."

30. "And the priest shall *offer* one for a sin-offering."

xvi. 9. "And Aaron shall *offer* (the goat) for a sin-offering."

24. "He shall *offer* his burnt-offering."

Num. vi. 11. "And the priest shall *offer* one for a sin-offering."

16. "And the priest—shall *offer* his sin-offering and his burnt-offering."

17. "And he shall *offer* (D.V. "immolate") the ram for a sacrifice."

viii. 12. "*Offer* (D.V. "sacrifice") thou one for a sin-offering and the other for a burnt-offering."

xv. 3. "And you will *make an offering* by fire unto Yahwè."

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Josue xxii. 23. "To *offer* sacrifices of peace offerings upon it (the altar)."

Judges xiii. 16. "If thou wilt *sacrifice* (R.V. "make ready" is incorrect) a burnt-offering, thou must offer it to Yahwè" (The angel's words to Manoah).

I (3) Kings viii. 64. "On that day (Soloman) —*offered* there the burnt-offering and the min̄ḥa."

I (3) Kings xviii. 23. Elias to the prophets of Baal: "And I will *sacrifice* the other bullock."

25. "Choose you one bullock for yourselves and *sacrifice* it first."

26. "And they took the bullock which he gave them and *sacrificed* it."<sup>1</sup>

II (4) Kings v. 17. "For thy servant (Naaman) will henceforth *offer* neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice to other gods, but unto Yahwè."

xvii. 32. "They made to themselves priests

<sup>1</sup> The Douay Version equally with the Authorized and Revised Versions translates in these three passages by "dress." There seems no reason for this translation. The Vulgate, like the Septuagint, keeps literally to the Hebrew: "faciam," "facite," "fecerunt."

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of the high places to *sacrifice* for them in the houses of the high places.”

Psalm lxxv (66) 15. “ I will *offer* bullocks with goats.”

Jeremias xxxiii. 18. “ to offer burnt-offerings and to burn the oblations, and to *offer* sacrifice.”

Ezekiel xlv. 17. “ he shall *offer* the sin-offering.”

xlvi. 2. “ and the priests shall *offer* his burnt-offering.”

xlvi. 15. “ And they shall *offer* the lamb and the min̄ḥa and the oil morning by morning.”

The above examples are sufficient to show that to the Jewish mind the word “ do ” frequently meant “ sacrifice.” We submit, further, that when the word is used in a context where there is mention of a “ covenant,” “ blood,” “ death,” etc., the meaning “ sacrifice ” is obviously the significance intended by the speaker. Let us take another word.

Christ commanded His apostles to offer the Eucharist *εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*, which is best

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rendered as *my memorial*. The expression εἰς ἀνάμνησιν is found in the Greek text of Leviticus xxiv. 7 corresponding to the Hebrew sacrificial term *Azkara*. The same expression occurs at the head of Psalms xxxvii (38) and lxix (70), referring in all probability to the liturgical sacrifice. The *Azkara* was generally part of the *minḥa* sacrifice ; but in Lev. xxiv. 7 it is associated with the twelve sacred loaves known as “ the loaves of proposition ” or “ bread of the Presence.” In either case we have a technical term associated with the ritual of sacrifice. (See Lev. ii. 2, 9, 16; v. 12 ; vi. 8 (D.V. 15) ; Num. v. 26.)<sup>1</sup>

According to the institution of Christ the Eucharistic Blood was “ the blood of the Covenant ” between Christ and His people. This phrase would instantly bring to the mind of the Jew the solemn sacrifice at Sinai when the Law was first promulgated. Moses took the sacrificial blood and sprinkling the people said : “ This is the blood of the Covenant which Yahwè hath made with you ” (Exod. xxiv. 1-11).

<sup>1</sup> According to the Vulgate text in Lev. xxiv. 7 it is the bread rather than the incense that is the *Azkara*. And certainly the priests did not eat every sabbath *burnt* bread. Probably when they had eaten the bread, the incense was burnt on the altar of incense as an *Azkara* of their consumption of the sacred bread.



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Further, from a passage that contained the climax of the message of Jeremias the Prophet, those who heard Christ's words would know full well to what He was alluding when He spoke of "the *new* Covenant in my Blood." This was the Covenant that was to supersede the Sinaitic Covenant and to remain for all time. See Jeremias xxxi. 31 ff.

Finally, St. Paul's Jewish converts were probably meant to see in the expression "cup of blessing" a reference to the Christian Passover; for the term was used by the Jews in their own Paschal supper.

We now understand how Jews in the time of Christ and of St. Paul would have interpreted certain expressions in the Eucharistic teaching. Putting ourselves, therefore, in the place of the Jewish converts at Corinth we may safely read through the relevant passages in the Epistle addressed to them, and easily recognise the gist. And in order to avoid delay on textual questions we will take the passages from the *Westminster Version*, where they are rendered according to the best textual authorities.

The most important of these passages is 1 Cor. xi. 23-29 :

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For I have received from the Lord, as I have also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night wherein he was being betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks brake and said, "This is my body, on your behalf; this do ye in remembrance of me." In like manner, after the supper, he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; this do ye, as often as ye drink thereof, in remembrance of me." For as often as ye eat this bread and drink of the cup, ye proclaim the death of the Lord, until he come. So that whoever eateth the bread or drinketh of the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup; for he that eateth and drinketh without distinguishing the body from other food, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.

From this passage we gather :

(1) For the celebration of the Eucharist *bread and wine are required* (the "matter" of the Sacrament). The wine is contained in a cup or chalice. The bread is broken.

(2) After the words of institution *the Body and the Blood of the Lord are present*. This presence is objective. It does not depend on the dispositions of the recipient (nor of the celebrant). St. Paul is no receptionist. The Body and the Blood are there antecedent to consumption. "This is my Body." The worthy and the unworthy equally receive the

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Body and the Blood of the Lord. There is no "insoluble problem as to *what* it is that the wicked receive in the Lord's Supper."<sup>1</sup> St. Paul is quite clear on this point. He says that they are guilty of (partaking unworthily of) the Body and of the Blood of the Lord. They fail to distinguish the Body from ordinary bread. Neither is there any suggestion that what takes place is merely "transvaluation," that is, that the bread receives the value of Body of Christ. This idea is obviously a modern and a western subterfuge. The text says nothing about value. There is a change of *thing*. Still less is the bread and wine merely a symbol or figure of the Body and Blood.<sup>2</sup> The person who receives without distinguishing the Body and the Blood from ordinary bread and wine is guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord. It is an evasion of the true sense to say that "the guilt is rather that of deliberate injury or insult to the king's

<sup>1</sup> Robertson and Plummer in the *International Critical Commentary*, 1 *Corinthians*, p.252.

<sup>2</sup> It is strange to find the false comparison between "This is my body" and "I am the door" or "I am the vine" still cherished by some non-Catholic writers. Had Christ taken hold of a door or of a vine and said "This is myself," without further explanation, a comparison would be possible. Such not being the case, the Protestant appeal is nothing more than an evasive figment.

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effigy or seal, or profane treatment of a crucifix.”<sup>1</sup> St. Paul’s point is that some ill-instructed Corinthians fail to realise that it is *not* just blessed bread that they are receiving, but the Body and the Blood of the Lord. It is careless want of knowledge (hence his repetition of his oral teaching), and not deliberate “insult or injury” that he is upbraiding. Hence the effects of this ignorance (“Therefore many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few are falling asleep”) are not the severe punishments that would follow deliberate sacrilege.<sup>2</sup>

(3) *There is a communion in the Eucharist.* By receiving the Body and the Blood one communicates with the life of Christ (that is with eternal life, see John vi), and, as a consequence of this, one continues a living member of the mystic body of Christ—the Church.

This is brought out more clearly in another passage of the same epistle, which also gives important teaching on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist :

<sup>1</sup> Robertson and Plummer, *loc. cit.*, p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> We need hardly point out that even if St. Paul was accusing them of deliberate sacrilege, which, of course, he is not, they would not, if symbols only were present, be any more guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ than would a person be guilty of Christ’s crucifixion because that person dishonoured a crucifix.

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Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to men of understanding ; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not fellowship (*κοινωνία*) in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not fellowship (*κοινωνία*) in the body of Christ? We many are one bread, one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Consider Israel according to the flesh : have not they who eat the sacrifices fellowship with the altar? What then do I mean? That the idol-offering is anything? Or that the idol is anything? No; but that what the Gentiles sacrifice " they sacrifice to devils and not to God "; and I would not have you enter the fellowship of devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils; ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of the table of devils. Or are we to provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? (1. Cor. x. 14-22. *West. Version*).

To this passage we may add another which certainly gives Pauline teaching, though the diction may not be Pauline :

It is good that the heart be made firm by grace and not by foods, from which they had no profit who occupied themselves therein. We have an altar from which they are not entitled to eat who serve the Tabernacle. (Hebrews xiii. 9, 10. *W. V.*).

From these passages it follows that the reception of the Eucharist gives grace, which comes from fellowship in Christ, obtained by the reception of His Body and Blood. Moreover, as a result of this union with Christ, Christians, by partak-

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ing of the one Bread, are intimately united, and the unity of the Church is maintained.<sup>1</sup> But as in these passages the idea of sacrifice is uppermost (see below) we may say that the unity of the Church is guaranteed by the one sacrifice. In modern language, it is the Mass that matters for the unity of worship among Christians.

(4) Above all, in the mind of St. Paul, *the Eucharist is a sacrifice*. Evidence of this is so manifold that we have space here only for an enumeration :

- (a) The Eucharist is contrasted with the pagan sacrifices (I Cor. x. 18-22).
- (b) The expression " the table of the Lord " in I Cor. x. 21 is taken from Malachy (i. 7, 12). It means the altar on which sacrifice is offered to the Lord. Malachy is predicting a new sacrifice to be offered among the Gentiles.

<sup>1</sup> Hence the wisdom of the Church's paschal precept. The Council of Lateran (1215) considers that a person who fails to receive the Eucharist once a year has separated himself from the fellowship of Catholic unity. Moreover, when at the Reformation the Church in England began to receive a bread in the Eucharist different from the one Bread of which Catholic Christendom partook, it broke from the unity and fellowship of Christ's mystical Body. There cannot, in the mind of St. Paul, be two different Breads in the Eucharist, any more than there can be two gospels : " One Bread, one Body, we many, because we all partake of the one Bread."

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(See also Ezec. xli. 22 ; xliv. 16). So in Hebrews xiii. 10. the Christian altar is far superior to the Jewish altar.

- (c) "This cup is the new Covenant in my Blood," which certainly contains the same sense as "This is my blood, of the Covenant" (Matthew and Mark), clearly refers back to the blood of the Old Covenant at Sinai when Moses took the sacrificial blood and sprinkled the people (Exod. xxiv.).
- (d) The use of "do" in the sense of "offer sacrifice," and of "memorial" or "remembrance" (See above).
- (e) "The new Covenant in my Blood"; "Ye proclaim the death of the Lord"; "fellowship in the Blood of Christ." To both Jew and Gentile in the time of St. Paul the death of a victim by shedding of blood meant only one thing, namely, an expiatory sacrifice. Nay, communion without a sacrifice would be unintelligible to Jew and Gentile.
- (f) According to the Synoptic Gospels Christ's Pasch began in the Supper Room (Matt. xxvi. 17-19; Mark xiv. 12; Luke xxii. 15). According to St. Paul Christ was the true

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paschal lamb. "Our passover hath been sacrificed—even Christ." (1 Cor. v. 7.)

- (g) The bread and the wine were not consecrated together. Christ did not say, "This is my body and blood." The bread was consecrated during the Supper, the wine was consecrated after the Supper. Why this separation? Non-Catholic writers so often overlook it. But the separation must have had a deep significance. Obviously it was meant to "proclaim the death of the Lord"—the separation of the blood from the body indicated the sacrificial character of the Eucharist.
- (h) "This is my body, on your behalf," is an abbreviation of "This is my body, which is given for you" (Luke xxii. 19)—the body being offered as a sacrificial victim.

It is therefore abundantly evident that in the mind of St. Paul the Eucharist was not merely a communion service but also a sacrifice.

This paper on the Pauline doctrine concerning the Holy Eucharist would be incomplete were we not to draw attention to the significant fact that practically all that the apostle wrote on the subject was prompted by his dread lest his con-



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verts should be making *bad communions*. True, in 1 Cor. xi he repeats (what he had taught orally) the history of the institution of the Eucharist, but he would not have done so had it not been for the disgraceful circumstances that attended the celebration at Corinth. Out of the Corinthian evil we have gained much. Before the celebration a social supper was held, which had given rise to grave abuses. Groups of cliques were formed; the well-to-do would not associate with the poor; the latter had little or nothing to eat; the former ate and drank sometimes to excess. What an unchristian preparation for the Lord's Supper!

Now, while laying the above charge upon you, I do not commend your meeting together, not for the better but rather for the worse. In the first place I hear that when ye come together to church there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must even be factions among you, that those of tried virtue may become manifest among you. When ye meet together, then, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper; for at the repast each one taketh first his own supper, and one is hungry and another drinketh overmuch. Have ye not home in which to eat and drink? Or do ye despise the Church of God, and put to shame the needy? What am I to say to you? Am I to praise you? In this I praise you not. (1 Cor. xi. 17-22. *W.V.*)

Earlier in the same epistle, wishing to show that

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Baptism and the Eucharist will not give eternal life to a man that does not avoid sin, St. Paul reminds his readers that

Our fathers were baptised in the cloud and in the sea ; and all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink—yet with the most of them God was not well pleased. (From x. 1-5.)

Why was God displeased with them ? Why did they not reach the promised land ? Because they committed fornication and idolatry and sinned against God. So let a baptised Christian who receives the Eucharist take warning and avoid sin. Let him “ examine himself,” that is, examine his conscience, and “ prove himself ” before approaching the table of the Lord (xi. 28, 31 : *cf.* Matt. v. 23, 24).

It will not be out of place to add two passages from the Epistle to the Hebrews, which contain at least implicit reference to bad communions :

How much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be deemed deserving, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant through which he was sanctified, and hath insulted the Spirit of grace ? . . . It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God ! (x. 29-31).

For it is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who have been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers in the Holy Spirit—and

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then have fallen away ; since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and make him a mockery. (vi. 4-6).

Had it not been for St. Paul's horror of bad communions, his epistles would have taught us nothing about the Eucharist. In which case the modernists, instead of telling us that the apostle borrowed from the mystery-religions of the Pagans, would be assuring us that St. Paul knew nothing at all about a Eucharist.

## V

# THE SECOND COMING

## (1) CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

**A**N exposition of the doctrine of St. Paul must necessarily conclude with the consideration of his "eschatology" or teaching about the end of the world, about τὰ ἔσχατα (*ta eschata*), the last things. The subject is bound to hold a prominent place in the teaching of any Christian teacher ; and in the apostles' hands it not merely receives considerable emphasis, but it has given rise to considerable difficulty and discussion. In the Epistles to the Thessalonians we find it causing both the apostle and his Christians practical difficulty ; and these early experiences appear to have determined him to lay less stress upon the topic in his future instructions. *L'enseignement eschatologique de S. Paul*, says Père Prat, *suit une marche nettement décroissante* ;<sup>1</sup> he has less and

<sup>1</sup> *La Théologie de Saint Paul*, Vol. II., ed. 2, p. 556.

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less to say about it. This fact is in itself significant ; a zealous missionary expecting the world to crumble about him every minute, such as the rationalists represent St. Paul, would not drop the subject, as he seems to have done, from mere motives of expediency.

It may be said that we have an orderly treatment of the whole matter in 1 Cor. xv, which these explanations will roughly follow. At Athens the Apostle's mention of Christ's resurrection had provoked derision (Acts xvii. 31-32), so that it may well have been the vicinity and influence of Athens that produced similar difficulties among the Christians of Corinth. St. Paul first establishes Christ's own resurrection as a historical fact, and then, as he is wont, includes therein the resurrection of Christians generally. He furnishes us, indeed, with the strongest historical proof for the actual fact of Christ's own resurrection. Writing within less than thirty years of the event, he enumerates those to whom Christ appeared. "He appeared to Cephas, and then to the twelve. After that he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at once, most of whom still survive, though some have fallen asleep.

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After that he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles " (1 Cor. xv. 5-7). These witnesses for the most part were personally known to St. Paul ; nor can there be any doubt as to the precise fact in proof of which he is bringing forward their evidence. One only has to read the following verses : " How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead ? If there is no resurrection of the dead, neither is Christ risen . . . if the dead do not rise, neither is Christ risen ", and so forth, until we come to the difficulty, " How do the dead rise ? And with what manner of body are they coming ? " Such a difficulty could not occur, nor would St. Paul offer the explanations that he does, if there were no real question of the body rising at all.

But to these ulterior explanations we must come later. For the present it may suffice to dismiss a minor difficulty, Our Lord's apparition to St. Paul himself. Briefly and roughly the objection may be presented in this way : this apparition is treated by many " critics " as purely subjective, and because St. Paul puts it on a level with the others, the others become involved in the same condemnation. The

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answer is obvious : St. Paul was convinced that he had seen Our Lord in the flesh, and this passage (1 Cor. xv. 8) is a proof of it. Another is to be found earlier in this same epistle (ix.1). Our modern critics may think that St. Paul was deluded, but they need not charge him with thinking so himself. At the most we can say that perhaps the apparition to St. Paul has less apologetic value, less value as sheer argument and proof than the others ; but not that it was less real.

“ Whether therefore I or they, so we preach, and so ye have believed ” (xv. 11) ; this fact of Christ’s resurrection, therefore, is not any private opinion of St. Paul’s, but he knows that it is likewise being taught by all the other apostles, of whom he has just been speaking. It should, in fact, be observed that the apostle lays great stress on the resurrection of Our Lord, not merely as a fact of history, but as an article of faith. This, too, is clear from this chapter, wherein he repeats several times that unless Christ be risen the Corinthians “ have believed to no purpose (xv. 2) . . . if Christ is not risen, vain truly is our preaching, vain too your faith (14) . . . if Christ is not risen,

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your faith is futile (17) ", and more to the same effect. More than this : " If thou confess with thy mouth Jesus for Lord, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved " (Rom. x. 9). The evident implication is, that belief in these two doctrines is necessary for salvation. The distinction between " confess with thy mouth " and " believe in thy heart " must not, of course, be pressed ; it is mere Jewish parallelism, the repetition of the same thought in other words, such as is familiar to us from the Psalms and other books and passages of Holy Scripture. St. Paul supposes that " confessing with the mouth " is to mean at the same time " believing in the heart ". To " confess Jesus for Lord " is to confess His Divinity, " Lord " being the regular word used in the Old Testament in place of " Jehovah ", the proper name of God, which was written but never pronounced ; this point lies outside my subject, and I must not linger upon it. What it is to " believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead " needs no explanation.

When one considers the emphasis laid on these two truths by St. Paul, and indeed else-



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where in the New Testament, one cannot but feel dismayed at the careless ease with which they are being jettisoned to-day by so-called ministers of the Christian religion. Dr. C. J. Cadoux, for instance, in his large work, *Catholicism and Christianity : A Vindication of Progressive Protestantism*, does not seem to be aware that in his zeal to destroy Catholicism he is destroying all else that could have any reasonable claim to be called Christianity. He will not suffer us to trust aught save our "Inner Light", or rather—since he appears to have some suspicion that even Catholics have an "Inner Light" (pp. 124-130, *etc.*)—it is his own "Inner Light" that we are to trust, and his own "Inner Light" is far from a frank acceptance of the two fundamental points here in question, the Divinity of Christ (pp. 221-6, *etc.*) and His bodily resurrection (pp. 223, 343, *etc.*). If this be "Progressive" Protestantism, it is "progress" away from St. Paul and the New Testament. Meanwhile, although I do not say that Catholics can neglect the multitude of minor points raised by irresponsible critics—points selected from all time and space and departments of thought, and in this a tribute to

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the true Catholicism of the Church—still, it is well to insist also that with the Catholic Church alone those Christian truths are safe which have always been recognised to be fundamental.

Such a truth is Christ's Resurrection ; though I am far from having brought forward all the historical evidence in its favour. There are many other passages that might be quoted even from St. Paul ; but I can do no more than mention two of his important discourses in the Acts wherein he touches on the subject, *viz.*, that delivered at Antioch in Pisidia (*cf.* Acts xiii. 29-37) and that at Athens, referred to at the outset of the lecture (*cf.* Acts xvii. 31).

### (2) THE GENERAL RESURRECTION

“ Christ is risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep ” (1 Cor. xv. 20). I have already remarked that in this great resurrection-chapter (1 Cor. xv) “ St. Paul first establishes Christ's own resurrection as a historical fact, and then, as he is wont, includes therein the resurrection of Christians generally ” (p. 114). This is but one application of St. Paul's central doctrine of the Christian's solidarity

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with Christ : “ It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me ” (Gal. ii. 20). This subject, so vast and so profound, being, in fact, “ the breadth and length and height and depth ” of Christ, and at the same time His “ charity, that surpasseth knowledge ”, whereby we are “ filled unto all the fulness of God ” (Eph. iii. 18-19)—such a synthesis it is impossible to present in a few lines before proceeding to apply it. The Christian is to live his life “ in Christ ”, even as Christ is to live His life once again in the Christian. As, therefore, Christ died and rose again in the flesh, so also the Christian is to rise again in the flesh after death. This is to be the general rule; for in the next section we shall see the great exception. And it is the principle of the Christian’s solidarity with Christ that dominates St. Paul’s thought upon the point. Besides 1 Cor. xv. 20, already quoted, I may further illustrate this from two passages which I shall have occasion to quote again, *viz.*, 1 Cor. vi. 14 (“ God through his power hath raised the Lord, and us too shall he raise up ”) and II Cor. iv. 14 (“ he who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise up us also with Jesus, and will place us along with you ”);

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where "us" refers to St. Paul and "you" to the Corinthians).

It is probably this very tendency to insist upon the principle of solidarity, this particular way of presenting the matter, that explains why St. Paul says hardly anything about the resurrection of the wicked, who have no place in this solidarity. In his epistles he is entirely silent on the point; but in Acts xxiv. 15, in his defence before the Roman procurator Felix at Cæsarea (about 56 A.D.), St. Paul says that like his accusers he has the hope in God "that there is to be a resurrection of the just and unjust". There appears to be only one other explicit reference to the resurrection of the unjust in the New Testament, *viz.*, John v. 29; but it is also mentioned in Daniel xii. 2. All the general references to the resurrection of the body in Holy Writ, however, evidently embrace the wicked also.

"But someone will say, How do the dead rise? And with what manner of body are they coming?" St. Paul repeats the obvious difficulty (1 Cor. xv. 35); but he is not complimentary to him that would put it. He begins his reply, in fact, by calling him a fool; so gross

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is the error whereof this imaginary Corinthian is guilty. Nor do I feel quite sure that he would be much more complimentary to a so-called "scientific" objector of modern times, even if he should first have submitted to an impressive lecture on the advance of biology and of kindred departments of knowledge. Science cannot produce a glorified body; we are all agreed about that. Nor has it the advantage of being able to study such a body in its physical and living operations; but then, nobody pretends that such a glorified body works in the same way as the human body works to-day under the conditions with which we are familiar. The glorifying of the human body is something above the laws of nature, due to the omnipotence of God; so long as we believe in an omnipotent God, it can present no serious difficulty. For those who do not so believe, there are other perplexities to be faced, far more serious; it is waste of time to trouble about this one. St. Paul, at least, presupposes absolute belief in an almighty God.

Hence also, he does not spend much time upon answering the difficulty he has put to himself. By means of several comparisons he

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propounds the notion that flesh can be of different *kinds*, meaning in this way to lead up to the difference between the human body in its present and in its glorified state. The plant that springs from the seed is not the same as the plant from which the seed was taken ; nor yet is it now just the seed itself, but something far more developed and perfect, such as is the glorified body in comparison of the human body we now bear. St. Paul, we may notice, speaks of the seed dying (I Cor. xv. 36), as does Our Lord Himself (John xii. 24) ; nowadays, we prefer to say that the seed does not die. The question is partly one of words, but in any case, it must be remembered that the apostle and his Master are following the popular way of speech (as we do when we say that the sun sets) and not committing themselves to scientific theories.<sup>1</sup>

“ Not all flesh is the same flesh ” (xv. 39) ; he turns to a different comparison, but once more it would be ridiculous to suppose that he really means that the glorified body is really not flesh at all, thus contradicting the rest of the

<sup>1</sup> The above remarks follow the lines indicated in Pope Leo XIII's great biblical encyclical, the *Providentissimus Deus* (Nov. 18, 1893) ; the matter is not sufficiently germane to my subject for further discussion here.

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chapter. Evidently the point of these comparisons is to let us see how it can truly be flesh, though not the kind of flesh to which we are accustomed. There are many kinds of flesh, the flesh of man and beast and bird and fish. And there are heavenly bodies as well as earthly bodies ; here the mention of flesh disappears, but the new comparison gains fresh point by contrasting earth and heaven. Even the heavenly bodies differ among themselves in glory. And then comes a short and eloquent outburst which sums up the whole question : "What is sown in corruption doth rise in incorruption ; what is sown in dishonour doth rise in glory ; what is sown in weakness doth rise in power ; what is sown a natural body doth rise a spiritual body " (xv. 42-44).

I should hesitate to say that what the scholastics have found in these words, or (to avoid any danger of doing them injustice) have propounded as their complete explanation, is all contained in the literal meaning; especially as the fourth clause appears to be a summary of the three preceding rather than the enunciation of a new quality, being caught up in the following words, "If there is a natural body, there is

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also a spiritual body". Still, the recognised description of a glorified body has in any case, a value of its own, and in any case finds at least strong support in this passage. Under "incorruption", then, we may bring "impassibility", freedom not only from death, but from all hurt or suffering to mind or body, from within or without. Under "glory" comes "clarity", the effect of the glorified soul upon the body, making it bright and shining. By "power" we shall understand "agility", a perfect vigour in all the powers and members of the body, rendering it completely subject to the control and direction of the soul. And finally, though I have remarked that St. Paul does not seem to be indicating a fourth quality by "spiritual" (a view in which I agree with Archbishop MacRory, in his excellent edition of the epistle<sup>1</sup>), still, in order to have a complete account of the glorified body, we may take the epithet "spiritual" to imply more especially the cessation of the operations of merely animal life in the body, whereof St. Thomas (*ad loc.*) mentions especially generation, growth and

<sup>1</sup> *The Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, by J. MacRory, D.D. (Dublin, 1915.)



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nutrition. The sensitive life will remain. How all this is to happen has not been revealed to us; but we know that it is easy to the omnipotence of God, and it is by these four qualities that we seem best able to sum up and explain what He has made known to us in Holy Writ and Catholic Tradition.

Our natural body we derive from Adam; our spiritual body—that is to say, the spiritualising of our natural body—we are to derive from Christ : “ even as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so let us bear the likeness of the heavenly ” (xv. 49). We are coming nearer to the final statement. “ Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ” (xv. 50). Do not let us be so foolish as to imagine that the apostle is now denying all that he has said so far in the chapter, that he means that the human body can in no case enter heaven. “ Flesh and blood ” in the New Testament does not signify the human body as such, but the purely natural man : the other passages where it is employed are Matt. xvi. 17 : Gal. i. 16 : Eph. vi. 12 : Hebr. ii. 14. I need not stop to discuss the various shades of meaning, but there is nothing whatever that would warrant us in saying that

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St. Paul meant here that no human body is to enter heaven ; the context both before and after shows the contrary. In John i. 13 there is some verbal likeness to this expression, but there is a fundamental difference of meaning.

We come to the " mystery ", which is reserved to the end : " we shall all be changed " (xv. 51). This verse raises other issues, to which I shall address myself later on ; for the present, it must be enough to note that all the just are to have a glorified body, whether they die or whether they do not. Their corruptible body is to be made incorruptible (xv. 50, 53), their mortal body must put on immortality (xv. 53). And thus " death is swallowed up in victory " (xv. 54).

There is so much to be said about St. Paul's own explicit teaching that I must not linger to answer difficulties of a more general nature about the resurrection of the body. Once more I must say, it is Almighty God who has revealed that He will bring it about, and it is easy for Him to do so. He can bring together the same matter that was our body's and unite it once more to the soul : He can ensure that the same matter be not required by different bodies : He can reproduce in a more perfect state bodies

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that were deformed : and so forth. When we think of the power of God such puzzles lose their interest, and we may be content to remain in some ignorance of details, smiling withal at those who tell us that such things cannot be.

### (3) THE FINAL TRANSFORMATION

What I wish to make clear under this heading is St. Paul's doctrine that the just who are alive at the last day shall not die, but shall have their bodies glorified without passing through death. The wicked also who are alive at that time shall not die ; St. Paul does not say this explicitly, but the wicked seem to be included in his more general expressions, and in any case, we should make this inference by analogy. The matter stands much as it does with the resurrection of the unjust (*cf.* p. 121), except for the absence of explicit statements ; St. Paul's main interest lies with the just. It was probably the failure to notice this fact that has produced our chief difficulty of text and interpretation.

Three passages call for consideration, all of them presenting difficulties, but not difficulties of a kind to cast any serious doubt upon the

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correctness of our present conclusion. In the first place, we may take 1 Thess. iv. 13-18 ; it will be best to present the whole paragraph, because it is important that the context be well understood.

“ Now we would not have you ignorant, brethren, touching them that sleep, that ye grieve not, even as the rest who have no hope. For as we believe that Jesus died and rose again, God will likewise bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep through him. For this we tell you as the Lord’s word, that we who live, who survive until the Lord’s coming, shall not precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself at a signal—the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God—shall come down from heaven ; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Thereupon we the living, who survive, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall be ever with the Lord. Comfort ye one another, therefore, with these words.”

I need not do more than mention that the “ sleep ” here in question is the death of the just ; and it may be noted—a point to which I have already called attention—how St. Paul

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couples the death and resurrection of the just with that of Christ Himself.

The Thessalonians are anxious about their dead ; are they to have no share in the glories of Christ's second coming ? They seem to have expected that this would take place in the lifetime of most of them, and had no doubts or difficulties about those who would then be alive, but they were troubled about their dead. Hence, we have a division into two classes only, " we the living " and " those who have fallen asleep ". St. Paul accepts their difficulty such as he finds it, and himself speaks of only two categories, without saying anything further about the precise time of the end, since that was not immediately in question. We shall consider his own expectations in the next section, and for the present must abstract from them. The Thessalonians need not abandon hope for their dead ; these latter are to rise first, and " we the living", the only other category of the just contemplated, shall then go to meet Christ in their company, " and thus we shall be ever with the Lord ".

What I am concerned to make plain at once is, that there is no question of death for the

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category "we the living". The dead rise ; "we the living, who survive", do not rise or die, but simply join them. The strength of an argument from silence is measured by the need of speaking ; and surely here the need of speaking was peremptory, surely it is well-nigh inconceivable that St. Paul should have omitted from his vivid picture the death and resurrection of "we the living", if he had thought that it was going to take place.

Nevertheless, this passage does not stand alone ; the next is in reality quite explicit, but I fear it is not very easy to follow for those who are not familiar with the apostle's writings. The whole paragraph, II Cor. v. 1-10, should be read carefully, and read more than once ; here I only pick out what more immediately serves my purpose. St. Paul has just written that "even though our outer man is decaying, yet is our inner man being renewed day by day". Thus in the midst of his many trials his thoughts have turned to death ; and it is of death that he continues to write : "For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home be destroyed, we have from God a building, a home not made by hands, eternal in the heavens." In the light of what

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follows it is clear that this heavenly home is the glorified body. "Yea, in this present abode we groan, yearning to be clothed over with that dwelling-place that is from heaven—if indeed we shall be found clothed at all, and not naked". Here, too, the "present abode" is the earthly body, the "dwelling-place from heaven" is the glorified body; and the apostle desires "to be clothed over" with the latter; the metaphor is perhaps a little awkward, but means that he wishes his earthly body to be glorified as it is, without passing through death.

When he adds, "if indeed we shall be found clothed at all, and not naked", we have one of those quick asides, a few words catching a passing thought, such as are so valuable in his epistles, and yet lead the unwary so easily astray. The idea comes, there must *be* something to "clothe over" with glory, we must, therefore be found "clothed"—not in the obvious sense of having a natural and earthly body, for that absolutely all will have in any case, but in the sense of being "clothed" in grace, "and not naked" thereof, for it is only the just that can be glorified in the strict sense of the word.

And then he goes on to speak more plainly.

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“ We who are in this tent groan under our burden, because we would fain not be unclothed, but rather clothed over, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life ”. He here expresses his natural longing and desire not to die, even as Our Lord expressed the shrinking of His human nature from the chalice awaiting Him : he “ would fain not be unclothed ”, fain not be despoiled of his natural and earthly body by death, but would “ rather be clothed over ”, rather have the robe of glory thrown about his body as it is, “ that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life ”, a phrase that reminds us of I Cor. xv. 53-54, written but a little time before. What is mortal would thus be permeated and penetrated and as it were, “ swallowed up ” by the glorious quality of life and immortality. Such is his natural desire ; but just as here below through the grace of God he has the courage to be “ at home in the body ” and “ exiled from the Lord ”, so also he is prepared “ even to prefer to be exiled from the body and to be at home with the Lord ”. Our natural life here below is an “ exile from the Lord ”, whom we do not yet fully possess, “ for we walk by faith, not by sight ” ; it is evidently to be preferred



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that we should be “exiled from the body, and be at home with the Lord”, for that means the happiness of heaven, even before the resurrection of the body, when the just already dead will receive back their bodies glorified.

The apostle longed to be with Christ, even at the cost of death. In later years he wrote to his dear Philippians : “I am caught between the two ; my longing to set forth and to be with Christ—for that were far better—yet for your sakes to remain in the flesh is more needful” (Philip. i. 23-24). But in the present passage he expresses his natural preference to be united to Christ directly by the mere glorification of the body, rather than by death. His meaning admits of no serious doubt, but (as sometimes happens) it is expressed in language that calls for some effort and attention. Of the reading of his epistles I can only say with St. John Chrysostom in his preface to the Epistle to the Romans, “Seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you”.

But I come to the third passage, where once again there is some difficulty, but of a quite different kind. It is 1 Cor. xv. 51-54, a passage already considered once, and to which we must

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return later. My sole concern at present is to show that St. Paul here teaches that the just who are alive at the last day shall not die; I shall first state my case, and then deal with the two obvious objections.

Once more, as in 1 Thess. iv. 13-18, we have two categories. "We shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed". All are to be "changed", that is to say, as is clear from what precedes and follows, the bodies of all are to be glorified; but "we shall not all fall asleep", not all are to die. The final state of glory, body and soul, is to be the same for all; but not all are to arrive thereat by passing through death. The two categories reappear at once: "*the dead* shall rise incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed". St. Paul ranks himself with the living, a point to which we shall return: and with the living, who shall merely be "changed", he contrasts those who have already died, who shall rise again.

This may seem plain enough, in the light of all that has already been said; but it is time to come to the two objections, both of which are concerned with the main words, "we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed". For in place of these words the

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Latin Vulgate reads. " We shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed ". In the first place, therefore, the question arises, which is the right text ? And if in answer to this the reading be adopted which I am following, a second difficulty of a more dogmatic character arises, is then the Latin Vulgate guilty of false teaching on the subject ?

It is difficult to treat a question of textual criticism adequately in a paper of this kind. Textual criticism is a most necessary and essential science, in order that we may ascertain as accurately as possible the very words used by ancient authors, both in Sacred Scripture and out of it : it is all the more necessary and essential that Catholic scholars should pursue the textual study of Sacred Scripture along sound lines, because it is exposed to gross abuse at the hands of the modern critics : but it makes no popular appeal, it arouses little interest or enthusiasm. Fortunately, in the case before us it is hardly necessary to deal with the matter at any length, for there seems to me a fairly general agreement among scholars in regard of my main contention, that the correct reading is that which I set forth at the outset: " we shall

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not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed ". We can affirm with a reasonable certainty that these are the words of the autograph, the words dictated by St. Paul himself. They are found in the famous Vatican manuscript, generally recognized to be the most reliable authority for the New Testament text, and in the vast majority of Greek manuscripts and of the versions.

The Sinaitic manuscript, however, which is the next most important, with three other Greek manuscripts and some other support of lesser weight, reads as follows : " we shall all sleep, but we shall not all be changed ". Perhaps the scribe was moved, consciously or unconsciously, to insist upon death as the common lot of man, and glory as not the common lot ; for he may have understood the change to be one to glory (as indeed St. Paul meant it to be understood), but without realising that the apostle was leaving the lost completely out of account. Or again the error may have been merely mechanical ; for it consists only of the shifting of the word " not ", a word of only two letters in Greek, from before to after the word for " we shall sleep ". And, indeed, it is just possible that

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we should translate this reading as we do the Vatican reading ; this is not absolutely impossible in the Greek, though rather forced. But, in any case, there is not sufficient authority behind this reading to make it a serious rival to the Vatican reading ; and besides, in its more obvious meaning it does not really suit the context. St. Paul has a mystery to tell (xv. 51), and we must not make of it a platitude. Again, the following verse (xv. 52) explains the obvious meaning of the Vatican reading, how the dead and “ we ” are both to be changed, but without those who belong to the latter category falling asleep in death ; it does not at all fit the Sinaitic reading, but if taken with it produces confusion.

The third reading, “ we shall rise again, but we shall not all be changed ”, is that of practically all the Latin authorities, and of the eccentric *Codex Bezae*, which often supports Latin readings. It is evidently a bold paraphrase, and has no serious claim to be regarded as the original text. From the point of view of the sense, too, it is open to much the same objections as the Sinaitic reading ; it does not suit the context either before or after.

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Nevertheless, when we reject the Vulgate reading, we are faced with a new difficulty, of a theological kind, from the fact that the Council of Trent (Session 4) made the Vulgate the official Bible of the Church. That the Council did not intend thereby to imply that all the Vulgate readings were correct, we know from a letter of the presiding legates themselves, insisting upon this very fact, for owing to suspicions to the contrary the Pope was hesitating to confirm the decree.<sup>1</sup> But they do insist that the Vulgate is a safe version ; and it is the common doctrine of theologians that in consequence of the Tridentine decree it must be considered free from formal error in regard of faith and morals. Otherwise, the Council would practically have been forcing such an error upon the greater part of the Church. Theologians also hold the same view of the present official Clementine edition of the Vulgate; though, indeed, there can be no doubt that the words here in question have always formed part of the Vulgate text, whether we be speaking of St. Jerome's original autograph or of the traditional

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Westminster Version of the Sacred Scriptures*, Vol. III, appendix I.

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text or of any particular edition or however we understand it.

Consequently we must be able to show that in rejecting the Vulgate reading we are not accusing the Vulgate itself of false doctrine. Nor indeed is this difficult ; for we may interpret the Latin text in the same way that has already been suggested for the Sinaitic reading. The great mass of mankind is to die, and therefore rise again, morally " all " ; for those left alive at the Last Day will only be but a very small number in comparison of all the human beings that have ever lived. Possibly, indeed, the tribulation of those last days will leave them far fewer than we should otherwise expect. In the same way the words, " we shall not all be changed ", must be referred to the change to glory, so as to exclude the lost. We have seen that such an explanation as this does not suit the context : but it is sufficient to save the Vulgate.

Nor must we yield to the temptation of a cheap solution, and adopting the Vulgate reading in defiance of the textual evidence, insist also upon an absolutely general death and resurrection. Even waiving any further objection from the context in this very place, I must

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still point out that there is no such Vulgate variation in the two previous passages upon which I have built my argument, which can, therefore, be demonstrated from the Latin as easily as from the Greek, so that a contrary conclusion from this passage would merely set the Vulgate at contradiction with itself. And there are arguments of no less weight to follow in favour of my general thesis. "If the Vulgate in the passage before us were interpreted to mean that all the just without exception are to rise from the dead at the last day, it would not merely contradict the inspired text and the creeds, but would be hopelessly at variance with itself."<sup>1</sup>

It is, in fact, time to bring forward even the creeds, wherein the Church has at all times professed her belief that Christ is to "judge the living and the dead". The clause is taken from II Tim. iv. 1 and I Peter iv. 5, with which verses may also be compared Acts x. 42, where the words are again St. Peter's. In the light of what has been said, there is only one way in which we can reasonably interpret these passages,

<sup>1</sup> *Westminster Version, loc. cit.* The words are quoted with approval by Father Callan, O.P., in his large edition of the Epistles of St. Paul (London, Herder), *ad loc.* (I Cor. xv. 51.)



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and the creeds based upon them ; indeed, it is hard to see what other sense they can possibly bear.

Finally, the view here set forth finds distinct support in the answers upon the subject of this paper issued on June 18, 1915, by the Biblical Commission, which acts in matters biblical with the authority of the Holy See. I shall have occasion to return to these answers presently, and would only note here that the Commission speaks of " those faithful who " at the Last Day " will go to meet Christ still alive ". The immediate reference is to I Thess. iv. 17 ( " to meet the Lord " ), and I render by " still alive " the Latin word *superstites*, which ( it appears to me ) necessarily bears this meaning. It need hardly be said that in a set of answers expressly devoted to St. Paul's treatment of the Second Coming, the Commission was not likely to throw in such a word by accident.

### (4) ST PAUL'S EXPECTATION

The main concern, however, of the Biblical Commission in the answers just mentioned is to insist that there can be no error from St. Paul's

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epistles, inasmuch as they are Sacred Scripture and inspired by God. God Himself is the main author of what is written, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, either in Holy Writ or in any other way. In a paper already too long I cannot stop to explain this doctrine, having indeed already done so in the course of lectures delivered here four years ago upon the Bible.<sup>1</sup> It must be observed, however, that the Commission is concerned to press the doctrine here, to insist upon the fullest measure of inerrancy. And in this way it establishes the Catholic position with the authority of the Holy See.<sup>2</sup> This position is, that St. Paul (or any other sacred writer) cannot be mistaken, not merely in what he sets down as certain, but even in what he shows himself to regard as the more likely to be true of two possible alternatives. In what follows this position is accepted as the Catholic rule of interpretation.

There is, in fact, a contrary opinion which we cannot brush aside as wholly imaginary, seeing that it commands the assent of by far the greater

<sup>1</sup> Since published under the title of *The Bible : its history, authenticity and authority* (Sands, 1926).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Bible*, etc., especially p. 148.

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number of serious biblical scholars outside the Church. We are freed by our faith and our obedience from the temptation of adopting such a view ; that is a reason for being grateful to God for our faith and our obedience, rather than for thinking that we should do just as well without them. The error is seductive ; safeguarded, however, by our faith and obedience, we can the more easily see that it does not offer a satisfactory explanation, even upon purely critical grounds. It is a cheap solution, founded upon an over-hasty deduction from the texts, to which upon closer examination it is found not to do full justice.

I allude, it will readily be understood, to the the opinion that St. Paul *does* show that he expects the end of the world to come at once, or at least in his own lifetime, and that he was, therefore, mistaken in this expectation. This opinion, again, is only part of a larger view upon the whole subject of eschatology, as it is called, the study of doctrines and opinions concerning the end of the world and the last things. Holy Scripture supplies only a part of the literature to be surveyed in such a study ; that it is unique by reason of its divine authorship is a fact only too

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often left out of account outside the Church. Yet it is not merely Holy Scripture in general that I must forbear to touch, but almost the whole of St. Paul's writings as well. There is, in fact, a multitude of passages interpreted by our modern critics to favour their view, all of them therefore more or less relevant to the point at issue, which it would take too long to consider. Nor, indeed, would there be much profit in running through them ; if one comes to them with the fixed idea that St. Paul expected the end, it is easy to interpret them on these lines, but it is by no means necessary to do so, and it may be enough to refer the reader to Catholic commentaries for alternative explanations. It will be wiser to concentrate upon the two passages that are recognised by all to be the real crux.

These have already been explained in part in the third section, and I shall take for granted what I have already said about them. The first passage is I Thess. iv. 13-18 (*cf.* pp. 129-131). At " the Lord's coming ", then, there will be two categories of the just : on the one hand " the dead in Christ ", those already dead, who are to rise again, and on the other hand, " we the living,

## *St. Paul and his Teaching*

who survive ", who (as has been argued throughout the third part) are not to die, but are to have their bodies glorified at once, without passing through death. Thus all the just are to have their bodies glorified at the Last Day, but not all are to pass through death first.

All this we may consider already clear ; but the problem remains, why does St. Paul speak of "*we* the living " in the first person, if he does not really mean to reckon himself among those who will be living at the Last Day ? To this question a twofold answer must be returned. Firstly, an explanation must be offered of this use of the first person ; but secondly, it may be shown on wider grounds that the supposition that St. Paul is writing in this way because he expects the end in his own lifetime is not one that squares with the evidence even of the Epistles to the Thessalonians. Let us, however, make our answer all the stronger by allowing the objection its due weight : let us admit that if St. Paul had been sure that the end was *not* coming before (at the earliest !) the twentieth century, it is not likely that he would have written as he did. But then we are not claiming that he knew exactly when the end was coming :

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far from it : we merely follow the Biblical Commission in asserting that " the Apostle Paul has said nothing at all in his writings which does not perfectly agree with that ignorance of the time of the Parousia (or Second Coming), which Christ Himself proclaimed to be the lot of men." This in the answers of June 18, 1915, already referred to. It is not knowledge, but ignorance, with which we would reconcile our texts.

Not that we need suppose the Thessalonians to have been as free from error in the matter as St. Paul himself ; on the contrary, it is precisely from his correction of their error that we draw our most powerful argument that he cannot have been guilty of the same error himself. In his first epistle to them he is not so greatly concerned with this question of the Second Coming ; but he evidently discovered that it was disturbing the Thessalonians far more than he had thought, and his second epistle is almost entirely devoted to the subject. I say " almost entirely", on the supposition that those who were causing trouble by their idleness (II Thess. iii. 6-15) had given over work in expectation of the Lord's early coming ; this is a common view, and is probably right.

## *St. Paul and his Teaching*

“ Now we beseech you, brethren ”, he writes in his second epistle, “ touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together unto him, that ye be not readily shaken out of your right mind nor kept in alarm—whether by spirit-utterance or by discourse or by a letter purporting to be from us—as though the day of the Lord were upon us ” (II Thess. ii. 1-2).

Note the use of the first person even here, in “ *our* being gathered together unto him ”, into the clouds to meet Him, as in I Thess. iv. 17 ; even when he is expressly deprecating an immediate expectation of the end, the apostle still numbers himself and his hearers (grammatically, I mean) with those who are to live to see it. It need not therefore mean very much ! But he goes on to speak of a sign that must precede Christ’s coming, *viz.*, Antichrist and his work ; this sign has not yet appeared, and, therefore, the end is not imminent. “ And now ye know,” he writes, “ what keepeth him back ” (II Thess. ii. 6) ; evidently he had explained the matter to the Thessalonians, but we are left to our own conjectures, in a rather tantalising ignorance. In the *Westminster Version* Père Prat’s suggestion

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is repeated, that the restraining power may possibly be St. Michael. From Rom. xi. 25-32 we learn of another sign that is to precede the end of the world, the conversion of the Jews, that is, of at least the great mass of the nation. In 1 Thess. ii. 15-16 St. Paul appears to be far from the expectation of any such conversion ; nor need we ourselves look for the end of all things until such conversion appears to be impending. But before I pass from the mention of Antichrist, it may be well to suggest that his persecution and the other trials of the Last Day may take the place of Purgatory for the just then surviving ; such a hypothesis finds support in 1 Cor. iii. 15, a verse, however, which I cannot stop to explain.

We are quite justified in interpreting the first epistle to the Thessalonians by the second, seeing that this latter is written so soon after the first with the very purpose of clearing the matter up. Nevertheless it is as well to point out that even in the first epistle St. Paul goes on to say that " touching the times and the seasons ye need not any written instructions, for your selves know well that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night " (1 Thess. v. 1-2).



## *St. Paul and his Teaching*

We find the same remark in II Peter iii. 10, following upon the significant protest that one thing must not be forgotten, that "with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"; and the saying might further be illustrated from Our Lord's own words and other New Testament passages. Here too St. Paul must be taken to mean what he says, and not to be expecting the end of the world in the near future. It was one of the possibilities; but the one certain thing to be expected of the coming of a "thief in the night" is that it will be as unexpected as possible.

In the light of all that has been said it should be clear that we must look for some other explanation of the use of the first person in I Thess. iv. 13-18 than any supposed expectation of Christ's second coming in the near future. Nor does it appear to be very difficult to find such an explanation. It was precisely the contrast between "we the living" on the one hand and "the dead in Christ" on the other that was worrying the Thessalonians, as has been already explained (pp. 129-131); for them there were indeed but two categories, and their trouble (as it comes before us in the first epistle) is the fear

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that "the dead in Christ" may lose some part of the good things in store for "we the living"; it is a generous fear, free from any anxiety lest they themselves may come to be numbered with "the dead in Christ". Hence St. Paul takes the problem as it has been put to him, without wishing to stir up fresh difficulties; it is only in the second epistle that he finds himself obliged to put the ulterior question of the *time* of the end quite in the forefront. In the first epistle he is content to answer in terms of the two categories, "we the living" and "the dead in Christ", without considering whom exactly they may be found to include. The difficulty had perhaps reached him in this shape by word of mouth through Timothy (*cf.* 1. Thess. iii. 6), or by other messengers, or by private letters, or by such a corporate letter as the Corinthian Christians wrote to him later on (*cf.* 1 Cor. vii. 1); perhaps by more than one of these channels.

It is also possible that the apostle himself was given to speaking in this way at times; being ignorant on the matter, why should he reckon himself with the dead more than the living? And it would be still less reasonable to expect him to safeguard his words by elaborate explana-

## *St. Paul and his Teaching*

tions every time that the subject came up. This is perhaps the reason for his use of the first person in 1 Cor. xv. 52, where the "we" obviously means the just alive at the Last Day, in contrast to "the dead" just mentioned. This verse occurs in a passage already explained at some length in the third part. I only note here that none of the explanations just offered for the use of the first person in 1 Thess. iv. 13-18 can safely be excluded here, apart from the mention there of Timothy; on the contrary, we have even better reasons for such suggestions here, inasmuch as we know for certain in this case that the Corinthians had written a corporate letter (1 Cor. vii. 1, just mentioned), and that St. Paul had also received private information about the state of things in Corinth from some of Chloe's household (1 Cor. i. 11). Further, it is clear from the whole chapter (1 Cor. xv) that he had discovered from these or other sources that the Corinthians were in great need of further instruction on the whole question of the resurrection of the body. How fully he meets this need should be sufficiently clear from this very paper.

If, however, anyone should rush to the con-

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clusion that the mere fact of the Apostle using the first person in regard of those alive at the Last Day is enough of itself to settle the whole matter, then he will probably be surprised to find him also speaking in the first person in this very epistle of those who are to be raised up from the dead : " for God through his power hath raised the Lord, and us too shall he raise up " (I Cor. vi. 14). And he does so again in II Cor. iv. 14, speaking in this case only of himself individually : " we know that he who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up also with Jesus ". Evidently no emphasis is to be laid upon the one way of speaking, when he could pass so easily into its opposite. (See also Rom. viii. 11).

In the second Corinthian epistle also we find the poignant passage which I have already explained in the third part, wherein St. Paul shows that he cannot tell whether or no he is to die, and expresses at once his own natural leanings and his resignation to the divine will (II Cor. v. 1-10 ; pp. 131-4). Later on (about 61 A.D.) he expresses a desire to his beloved Philippians " to set forth and to be with Christ " (Philip. i. 23), being then, as he writes about the same time to Philemon, " an old man "

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(Philem. 9). Later still (perhaps in 67 A.D.) we find him awaiting calmly his martyrdom (II Tim. iv. 6-8) :

“As for me, already I am poured out in sacrifice, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have accomplished the course, I have kept the faith. For the rest there is laid up for me the crown of justness which the Lord, the just judge, shall award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have loved his appearing.”

Yes, that must be our last thought, to love “that day”, and the Lord’s “appearing” at His second coming : to desire His final triumph with His saints, when the work shall be fulfilled for which He came upon the earth.

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